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# Executive Summary

## Why have we produced a housing strategy?

Firstly because the Council believes that every resident should have access to a decent home that meets the needs of their household. Residents should also be able to exercise a degree of choice over the type and location of their home. These principles underpin what this housing strategy is trying to achieve.

Furthermore, a housing strategy is not just about housing. We know that good or bad housing has knock-on effects for a range of issues that are important to the success and well-being of our communities in Rotherham. These include health, educational achievement, economic prosperity, and community safety. And in recent years, many new housing developments have been at the forefront in terms of environmental sustainability – using sustainable and recycled materials, energy efficiency measures, and domestic power generation.

As well as the factors outlined above, the housing role of a local authority has changed over the last 10-15 years. Many councils, like Rotherham, have opted (with tenant support) to devolve management or ownership of their council housing to separate organisations. In our case, we set up an Arms Length Management Organisation, 2010 Rotherham Ltd to manage and improve our 21,000 plus council homes. This separation from direct management of housing allows the Council to concentrate on its wider strategic housing role, intervening and influencing across all housing in Rotherham – public (council and housing association), owner occupied, and private rented.

It is only through effective planning and activities across all sections of the housing market that we can hope to achieve our goal of ensuring that every resident can access decent quality housing that meets their needs. That is why this strategy:

- analyses the issues involved
- identifies priorities for action
- sets out the actions required

Development and ratification of the strategy has involved consultation with a wide range of residents and key partner organisations, including Rotherham Partnership.

## Our aims and objectives

Rotherham has been undergoing a remarkable transformation in recent years – this once declining industrial town now boasts strong economic growth, low unemployment and improved quality of life for most of its residents. Housing has had a significant role to play, through new housing development, decent homes programmes and place-shaping initiatives.

The job is far from complete, however. The borough still faces some serious housing issues. These include problems of housing affordability, pockets of multiple deprivation and low demand, rural housing issues, and a small but significant amount of poor quality private sector housing.

This strategy intends to address these issues. This is reflected in our overall aim for our housing strategy,

*“Building prosperous, inclusive communities and shaping places where people have a real choice of housing.”*

In order to realise this aim, we have adopted three cross-cutting objectives:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place-making
- Inclusion and access

## Strategic context

The strategy has been developed within the wider national and regional housing context. For instance, the government has set an ambitious national target of three million new homes by the year 2020, and our strategy takes account of this and major government policy initiatives such as “Strong and Prosperous Communities” and “Homes for the Future”. Regionally, this strategy corresponds to many of the issues and priorities contained in the South Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy, the Regional Housing Strategy, and the Housing Market Strategy for South Yorkshire.

Within Rotherham, this new housing strategy sits beneath the main Community Strategy. It is pitched at an overarching strategic level, allowing plans for different aspects of housing to feed in, as illustrated in the diagram below:



## Our achievements

This strategy follows on from our previous “fit for purpose” housing strategy, which covered the period 2005-2008. We achieved 96% of the actions and targets from the strategy. Our most significant achievements were:

- We completed Phase 1 of our Housing Market Renewal pathfinder programme – investing over £30 million in improvements to neighbourhoods, new housing provision, and design-led initiatives
- Our ALMO, 2010 Rotherham Ltd, was awarded 2 stars at inspection and commenced a decent homes investment programme of over £300 million
- We have made significant progress in preventing and tackling homelessness. Homeless acceptances have been reduced by 75%, and use of temporary accommodation has fallen by a half
- We launched “Key Choices”, our new choice-based lettings scheme
- We have delivered more than 250 new affordable homes through our partnerships with housing associations
- We were awarded beacon council status for “better public places” in 2007
- We developed a groundbreaking comprehensive Design Guide for town centre renaissance

Over the last five years or so, we have come a long way in addressing some of the large-scale and complex housing issues faced by the Borough, such as poor quality housing, areas of low demand, the need for more affordable homes, and creating safer neighbourhoods. But there is still more to be achieved. The strategy shows how we have identified future priorities and strategic direction.



## Our priorities for 2008-11

The housing strategy contains a detailed analysis of housing need in Rotherham, building on and updating the picture of housing need from our previous strategy. Our analysis is informed by data and research findings from a variety of sources, including:

- Census data
- Rotherham Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007
- Rotherham Private Sector Housing Condition Survey 2007
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd Investment Plan

The needs analysis has enabled us to identify the main housing issues that still need to be tackled in Rotherham:

- We need more homes across all tenures as the local economy grows and average household size continues to reduce.
- We must continue to tackle neighbourhood and housing conditions in the poorest areas of the borough, where there are high levels of multiple deprivation, and pockets of low housing demand still remain.
- We remain committed to making sure that homes of all tenures meet the national decent homes standard.
- We need to help those households that are still experiencing fuel poverty, and those in danger of becoming fuel poor.
- We need to address the under-supply of affordable housing in rural parts of the borough.

- We must continue to address the housing and support needs of vulnerable groups, taking account of future demographic projections.
- We need to maintain our excellent progress on homelessness prevention.
- We must decide on the future of 2010 Rotherham Ltd (our ALMO) and any opportunities for organisational development that this presents.
- We should continue to put high quality design and environmental sustainability at the forefront of our housing activities.

Following consultation, we have arrived at three key strategic objectives that allow us to address the issues in the most effective way.



These themes mirror the thematic approach in the South Yorkshire Housing Market Strategy – enabling us to translate plans and actions right through from local to regional level, maximising our resource potential.

## Our targets and actions

The targets and outputs cover the period 2008-11, and are described in full in the three thematic sections of the strategy. They are deliberately strategic in nature; more detailed action plans are contained within the other housing plans that support this strategy, such as the Homelessness Action Plan and Private Sector Housing Strategy.

Our major targets/actions are:

## balancing housing markets

- Delivering Phase 2 of Housing Market Renewal - investing £27 million in regenerating neighbourhoods and homes
- Developing hundreds of new affordable homes every year for rent and low cost home ownership
- Remodelling housing estates such as Eastwood, in partnership with 2010 Rotherham Ltd
- Ensuring that new housing meets the highest standards for design and environmental sustainability
- Developing more affordable housing in rural areas
- Working with Planners to maximise the amount of new housing provided through planning gain (S106)
- Exploring new delivery vehicles for developing social housing

## quality housing & place making

- Working with Rotherham 2010 to complete the decent homes programme for all council homes
- Investing £34.2 million in private sector housing programmes - targeting vulnerable households and the private rented sector
- Helping home owners to improve their homes, through Home Appreciation Loans and Home Improvement Agency activity
- Producing masterplans and design guides for urban centres - including Maltby and Dinnington
- Investing in neighbourhood centres and green spaces to ensure their long term sustainability
- Increasing Safer Neighbourhood Team activity to targeted estates
- Increasing energy efficiency referrals by 20%
- Developing more carbon neutral homes

## inclusion and access

- Extending Key Choices to other tenures
- Providing high quality housing advice and guidance
- Developing a gateway service for all emergency accommodation
- Building all new affordable homes to Lifetime Homes standards by 2011
- Providing more Supported Living schemes for people with learning disabilities
- Commissioning more new housing that meets BME needs
- Continuing to develop innovative extra care schemes for older people
- Providing and developing a new local authority site for gypsies and travellers

## Ensuring success – delivering the strategy

The strategy is backed by a comprehensive Action Plan – which identifies task owners, resources and timescales. This allows all areas of activity to be monitored regularly and effectively. A similar approach was used for our previous housing strategy, enabling us to complete 96% of actions within deadline.

Progress against the Action Plan will be monitored on a regular basis by the following bodies, and a bi-annual progress report will be provided for the Council’s Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods.



We will also be providing feedback and updates to key organisations and residents through our existing partnership arrangements and through communications leaflets/briefings.





## Introduction – aims and objectives

Rotherham is a borough that is transforming itself. Major changes over the last few years have seen the town and its surrounding communities stage a remarkable recovery from the position in the 1980s and early 1990s of a declining industrial centre with high levels of unemployment, poverty and deprivation.

By contrast with those days, Rotherham is now a borough with excellent prospects. Rapid economic growth has created new jobs. The percentage of people employed is higher than the national average. Educational attainment is increasing and the local skills base continues to improve. Crime is reducing, and the health of the local population, measured by life expectancy, is better than ever. Essentially, quality of life in Rotherham has changed significantly for the better.

That is not to say that everything is perfect. Despite the overall picture of strong progress there are still many issues that continue to need attention. Progress in some geographical areas has not been as good, and results in some key issues are still below the national or regional average. Evidence also suggests that there are still inequalities among groups and communities within the borough.

The Council has itself come a long way in a short time. From a Comprehensive Performance Assessment of “Weak” in 2003, Rotherham became one of the top ten most improved councils in the country with a “Fair” rating in 2004. We are now a top-rated four-star “Excellent” authority that the Audit Commission says is “improving well”.

These improvements were reflected in our 2005/06 – 2007/08 Housing Strategy, which was rated as “fit for purpose” by the Government Office for Yorkshire and Humberside. This new strategy builds on the platform that was laid by the previous one, by continuing to develop several of the ongoing themes and activities. It examines the changes that have occurred both nationally and locally over the last three years, and how Rotherham intends to address these challenges. Finally, it sets out a long term strategic vision for housing in Rotherham – one that aims to help Rotherham to continue to develop and prosper, both economically and socially.

### Aims and vision

Rotherham Partnership’s Community Strategy central vision is:

*“for Rotherham to be a prosperous place with a high quality of life and excellent services which are accurately targeted to local needs”*

This is backed up by seven priority themes, developed through extensive community consultation:

- Achieving
- Learning
- Alive
- Safe
- Proud
- Sustainable Development
- Fairness

This new Housing Strategy aims to make a major contribution to the Community Strategy vision for Rotherham, through our three cross-cutting themes of:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place-making
- Inclusion and access

These themes are also those used in the South Yorkshire Sub-Regional Housing Strategy, “Making the Difference” (2007). By adopting these themes for Rotherham’s Housing Strategy we are able to show a clear and consistent approach to addressing housing issues, from the most detailed local level through to large-scale regional market interventions.

Our aim for this housing strategy can thus be encapsulated in the following statement:

*“Building prosperous, inclusive communities and shaping places where people have a real choice of housing.”*

This is our challenge – and it is one that we readily accept. This strategy describes how we intend to meet that challenge.

## Housing Plans

This housing strategy is the overarching strategy for housing in Rotherham – across all tenures and types of housing, and embracing each area of housing need. It should be seen very much as an umbrella strategy, setting the overall priorities and strategic direction within which our other more detailed housing plans can operate. These other housing plans are formed from, and in their turn feed into, this strategy. The following diagram best illustrates this interrelationship:



## Rotherham – an Overview

Located in South Yorkshire, Rotherham has a rich industrial heritage centred on the twin industries of steel production and coal mining. In recent years the town has diversified its economic base attracting inward investment and creating new jobs in growth industries such as information technology and light engineering.

These changes have sparked a local renaissance, and Rotherham now benefits from economic growth rates above the national and regional average, with educational attainment improving every year, and unemployment levels at their lowest level for many decades. The Borough's population, which had declined during the 1980s and 1990s is increasing again, and is projected to increase by another seven percent by 2021, as people continue to be attracted to the area.

Rotherham comprises a diverse and vibrant blend of people and communities. It is a mix of urban centres and smaller villages, interspersed with large rural spaces. Geographically, Rotherham is 70% rural, although the rural population is just over 10% of people in the borough.

The population of Rotherham is over 253,000. In common with the rest of the UK, we have an ageing population, with the number of people over 70 expected to increase by some 70% over the next 25 years. Rotherham's minority ethnic population makes up around 5.4% of the total population, lower than the national and regional average. The largest single minority ethnic community is Pakistani. Over recent years there has been small but significant in-migration of people from Eastern European EU accession countries.

The Council has a Leader and Cabinet model of governance, reinforced by a strong and effective Scrutiny function. The housing brief is held by the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods. Council services are delivered by five directorates:

- Chief Executive
- Neighbourhoods and Adult Services (including housing)
- Children and Young Peoples' Services
- Environment and Development Services
- Financial Services

The Council is currently rated as a top "four star – excellent" authority, and has been awarded beacon status in seven different categories in recent years.

Despite Rotherham's recent socio-economic success, there are still serious local issues which continue to need attention. These include:

- Skills and qualification levels that are below average
- Income levels below national averages
- Life expectancy below national average and a high proportion of people with limiting long term illnesses
- Low housing demand in some areas
- An increasing housing affordability gap
- Spatial differentials between local communities – there is a significant gap between the best and worst performing wards (measured by levels of multiple deprivation)

The Council's major strategies, including this housing strategy, all aim to tackle these issues through targeted joint intervention.

There are additional issues of crime, fear of crime and community safety, which are of particular importance to local residents. Although the borough has low crime rates compared to national and sub-regional averages, it is still an issue which is high on residents' lists of priorities. The multi-agency Safer Rotherham Partnership co-ordinates community safety activities around the borough's seven Area Assembly areas. The Partnership has been successful with a number of anti-social behaviour initiatives and has successfully improved resident perceptions of community safety.

## Housing Stock

Overall figures for housing are as follows:

There are 109,530 dwellings in Rotherham (source: Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix). This figure represents about 20% of all dwellings in the South Yorkshire sub-region. The tenure distribution is shown in the table below:

Tenure	Rotherham	S Yorkshire	England & Wales
Owner occupied	65.3%	63.6%	68.3%
Shared ownership	0.3%	0.4%	0.6%
Local authority	23.2%	23.7%	13.2%
Housing Association	3.2%	3.0%	6.0%
Private rented	5.0%	6.5%	8.7%
Other	3.3%	2.9%	3.2%

Comparison with national figures show that Rotherham has a lower proportion of owner-occupiers and private rented tenants than the rest of England and Wales. By contrast, we have a larger local authority rented sector. Rotherham's tenure picture is fairly similar to the overall figures for the South Yorkshire sub-region.

### **Housing Conditions – Social Housing**

In the social housing sector, considerable work has been carried out over recent years to address the decent homes standard. Our ALMO, 2010 Rotherham Ltd was awarded 2 stars by the Audit Commission in 2006 and has been undertaking a £300+ million investment programme since 2005. As a result the proportion of non-decent homes has reduced from 74% to 47.64% (as at March 2008). 2010 Rotherham's Decent Homes Programme is on course to meet the Government's 2010 decent home target – providing that the Government continues to release the required funds between now and 2010.

Within the Council's stock there are a number of dwellings of non-traditional construction (mainly pre-cast reinforced concrete). Some of these do not have an economic future. The Council's Neighbourhood Investment Team, in partnership with 2010 Rotherham Ltd has just carried out an asset management survey of all non-traditional stock. This has resulted in a decision to invest in 492 properties through the decent homes programme. Further consultation relating to the remaining 330 properties is required, the outcome of which will see the production of an investment plan during the Summer 2008.

### **Housing Conditions – private sector**

A comprehensive private sector stock condition survey was carried out for Rotherham by Fordham Research in late 2007, with results published in February 2008. The survey had the following key findings:

- Over 85% of private sector dwellings were built after 1919 – compared with 75% nationally
- There are 3,500 vacant private sector homes – nearly 1,400 these have been empty for over 6 months
- 11% of private sector homes (9,349 in total), have a Category 1 Hazard under the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) – most of these relate to cold and fall hazards
- The average cost per dwelling for carrying out urgent repairs is £1106
- There are roughly 400 houses in multiple occupation (HMOs), only 5 of which fall under the definition of "licensable"
- The private rented sector is only 5-6% of all homes in the borough, and is predominantly terraced houses and flats

In terms of the decency standard, only 20.7% of private sector homes are non-decent, although the situation is poor in the rented sector, with 44.9% of homes failing to meet the decency standard. The total cost of remedying private sector non-decency in the borough is an estimated £53.9 million, which translates as £3,098 per each non-decent dwelling.

## Achievements

This section shows our progress to date in addressing Rotherham's housing issues during the period covered by the previous housing strategy (2005/06 – 2007/08). It offers our headline major achievements, and an assessment of our performance against the last strategy action plan.

### Headlines

- Phase 1 of our Housing Market Renewal pathfinder programme was completed – with improvements to neighbourhoods, new housing provision, and design-led initiatives
- Our ALMO, 2010 Rotherham Ltd, was awarded 2 stars at inspection and commenced a decent homes investment programme of over £300 million
- Homeless acceptances have been reduced by 75%, and use of temporary accommodation has fallen by a half
- Rotherham was awarded beacon council status for “better public places” in 2008
- We developed a comprehensive Design Guide for town centre renaissance
- We launched “Key Choices”, our new choice-based lettings scheme
- We delivered more than 270 new affordable homes

### Delivery

The Action Plan included as part of the previous housing strategy comprised 94 separate targets/projects, spread across 11 strategic objectives. By March 2008, we had completed 90 of these actions, equating to 96% completion. These included:

#### Balancing Housing Markets

- First Living Over The Shops (LOTS) Scheme completed on the town centre supporting local businesses
- Award for Housing Design at Westgate Demonstrator
- Developed mixed tenure housing solutions to increase range of affordable housing options including shared ownership and ‘Homebuy’ as part of 2006/08 Affordable Housing Programme
- Completion of three major regeneration schemes at Maltby, Wath and Wharncliffe improving over 800 homes and the demolition of unpopular flats and maisonettes



## Quality Housing and Placemaking

- Developed neighbourhood masterplans for deprived urban centres
- Assisted over 2,000 private sector households with loft insulation and cavity wall insulation
- Completion of 2 alley gating schemes in Eastwood and Brinsworth (work starting on a 3<sup>rd</sup> scheme at Masbrough) has seen a reduction in crime statistics in these areas
- £2.3m invested in parks and green spaces
- Providing Training opportunities for residents in regeneration areas through partnership working with construction companies and groundwork companies
- BME Housing Design protocol held up as good practice
- 23 family homes built at Henley Rise in accordance with Level 5 of Code for Sustainable Homes (carbon neutral)
- Beacon Award for 'Better Public Places' 2008

## Achieving Inclusion and Access

- 2 Extra Care Housing Developments have been built in the North (Potteries Court, Swinton) and centre (Oak Trees) of the borough. Plans in place to develop a third scheme (Longfellow Drive, Herringthorpe)
- Introduction of 3<sup>rd</sup> 'Key Ring' scheme in Thurcroft in partnership with Supporting People and Learning Disability Services
- Introduction of Key Choices - Choice Based Lettings Scheme



## Strategic context

This strategy has been developed using evidence and information from a range of sources: consultation; census data; research findings; performance information; benchmarking & best practice; and market analyses. It also embraces the wider policy agenda for all local government services, as we know that housing does not operate in a policy vacuum.

Our goal is to ensure that our strategic approach to housing helps us to develop long-term sustainable communities – to do this we need to be up to the minute with our understanding of the legislative and policy framework and the benefits that it can afford.

### National context

The Government has recognised the importance that housing brings to national prosperity and well-being and accordingly has made the provision of quality housing a national policy priority. With a national delivery target of three million new homes by 2020, this sets a challenging agenda for local authorities.

Before analysing legislation and guidance in detail it is worth examining some of the wider, even global factors that will influence housing over the lifetime of this strategy.

- Global warming – climate change is being tackled on a global scale. Communities and families are becoming more aware of the need to minimise their carbon footprints. This has a housing effect in terms of transport, commuting, building design & materials, and home energy use.
- Global economy – this strategy is being produced at a time of global economic uncertainty, fuelled by difficulties in the American and European lending markets. This has already had a significant effect on the US property market. At the time of writing, expert opinion is divided on the possible effect in the UK. What appears most likely is a national fall in house prices of up to 10-15% over the next 2 years (although some economists posit only a levelling off of prices). The actual severity may depend on the banks' medium-term approach to lending due to the "credit crunch".

The following diagram outlines the national legislative and policy drivers that have informed development of this housing strategy:

Strong and Prosperous Communities (2006) and Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act (2007)	Respect Action Plan (2006)	Our Care, Our Health, Our Say (2006)
Sustainable Communities: Homes for All (2005)	Homes for the Future (2007) and Housing & Regeneration Bill (2007)	Planning for a Sustainable Future (2007) and Planning Bill (2007)
Planning Policy Statement 3 – Housing (2006)	Building a Greener Future (2007)	The Code for Sustainable Homes (2008)

We will continue to develop our strategic plans over the period covered by this strategy, and will do so by ensuring that we always take emerging government policy and guidance into account.

## Regional Context

Rotherham is within the Government Office region of Yorkshire and Humberside, located to the South of this wider region which encompasses the industrial urban heartlands of Yorkshire and Hull, the rural hinterlands of these centres, and the more rurally dominated areas of North Yorkshire.

Sub-regionally, Rotherham is one of the four boroughs that comprise South Yorkshire (the other three being Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster). The South Yorkshire area is characterised by its former industrial heritage, based around coal mining and steel production. When these industries went into terminal decline in the 1980s, the region suffered socially and economically as a result. It is only over the course of the last 10-15 years that recovery has taken place, due to a combination of national and local initiatives and significant inward investment within the sub-region.

In 2008, South Yorkshire has higher economic growth than the national average, low unemployment, and a population that has started to increase again, after 20 years of net outward migration.

However, many communities in South Yorkshire exhibit signs of social and tenorial polarisation. Multiple deprivation remains high in many areas, with particular issues around skills, education, earnings and health.

Perhaps the key housing development of the last few years has been the South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder (HMR) programme. The South Yorkshire HMR is the largest of nine national pathfinders, created in 2004 to address structural issues of low housing demand and market weaknesses. The HMR area covers both urban and rural areas, and encompasses over 140,000 households within its remit.

The diagram below outlines the key regional and sub-regional strategies and initiatives that have helped to shape this strategy.



### **Making the Difference – a Sustainable Housing Market Strategy for South Yorkshire (Transform South Yorkshire, 2007)**

Transform South Yorkshire was created through the merger of the South Yorkshire Housing Market Renewal Partnership and the South Yorkshire Housing and Regeneration Partnership. The housing market strategy covers the period 2008-18, and is jointly agreed by the four South Yorkshire authorities, and other key strategic partners. It combines the HMR Pathfinder strategy and other housing-led regeneration initiatives in the one overarching strategic plan.

There are three main strategic themes to the strategy:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place-making

- Achieving inclusion and access

These are broadly the same themes as used in the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Housing Strategy, thus recognising the strategic importance of these topics to effective housing intervention within the region.

We have also used these themes as the main priorities for this housing strategy, reflecting the clear upward and downward links between regional, sub-regional and local plans.

The strategy also focuses on spatial priorities for investment:

- The main urban centres – Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley
- Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder area – the Dearne Valley, and the Sheffield/Rotherham axis
- South Yorkshire Green Corridor – the former coalfield area on the boundary between Barnsley, Doncaster and Wakefield
- Rural areas – including Dinnington and Maltby within the Rotherham MBC area

The Investment Plan within the wider strategy contains £1.06 billion to be invested by 2018, funded by the Regional Housing Board, National Affordable Housing Programme, Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, and other public/private sources.

## Local context

Addressing local housing issues is only one of the significant challenges facing Rotherham. In common with other former industrial communities, particularly those in South Yorkshire, we have over the last 10-15 years been tackling issues of economic regeneration, employment, skills, poverty and health. We have also been trying to build strong, sustainable communities and rebuilding pride in our area.

The Council's track record is now one of considerable success. Over the last five years we have:

- Moved from a CPA rating of “weak” to a top rating of “excellent”
- Been awarded seven “beacon council” awards for our work in areas such as Valuing People and Removing Barriers to Work
- Had our previous Housing Strategy rated as “fit for purpose” by the Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber
- Had our ALMO (2010 Rotherham Ltd) assessed as providing 2-star “good” services
- Received Charter Marks for our frontline services

- Been voted “top council” in the 2008 LGC Children’s Services Awards

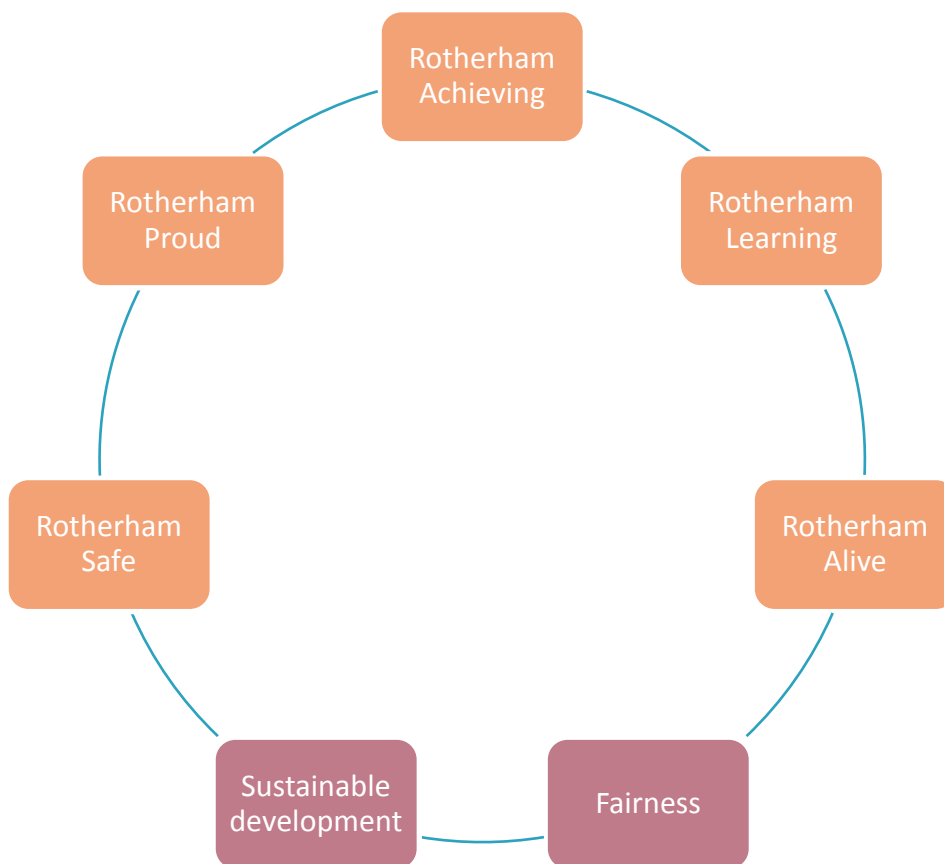
Rotherham has a strong multi-agency strategic partnership, the “Rotherham Partnership” which brings together key decision-makers from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Their role is to agree and oversee the implementation of joint strategic objectives to improve Rotherham.

The key document is the Rotherham Community Strategy 2005-11, which is the overarching strategic plan for Rotherham. It describes the vision for the future of the borough, and sets out the key targets and actions that all partner organisations are committed to achieving. It was developed through listening to local people, groups and organisations, and embracing their priorities.

The community strategy sets out a central vision for Rotherham:

*“for Rotherham to be a prosperous place with a high quality of life and excellent services which are accurately targeted to local needs”*

The broad aims of the strategy are to deliver the vision for Rotherham by providing a widely owned strategic framework focusing action of five strategic themes and two cross-cutting themes:



Actions from this housing strategy and the previous one make a significant contribution to achieving the aims of the Community Strategy. The following tables illustrate this by Community Strategy theme area.

ROTHERHAM ACHIEVING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinder improving most deprived neighbourhoods</li> <li>○ HMR pathfinder improving parks and public spaces</li> <li>○ Design guide produced for town centre regeneration</li> <li>○ Area masterplans produced by Housing and Neighbourhood Investment Teams</li> <li>○ Rural housing strategy produced and rural site audit carried out</li> </ul>

ROTHERHAM LEARNING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Transform South Yorkshire and Rotherham housing strategies aligning job creation and housing growth</li> <li>○ Neighbourhoods and Housing new place-shaping team empowering local residents through formal and informal structures</li> <li>○ 2010 Rotherham Ltd local labour and contractor schemes</li> </ul>

ROTHERHAM ALIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rotherham 2010 Decent Homes Programme improves thousands of homes</li> <li>○ Private sector housing strategy targets elderly and vulnerable living alone</li> <li>○ Supporting People enabling more people to live independently</li> <li>○ New move on housing provision allows quicker hospital discharges</li> <li>○ Affordable Warmth strategy and action plan improving hundreds of homes</li> <li>○ More new housing of “lifetime homes” standard</li> </ul>

ROTHERHAM SAFE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HMR makes improvements to community safety in target areas – including improved lighting, signage, CCTV</li> <li>○ New affordable housing built to “secure by design” standards</li> <li>○ 2010 Rotherham in partnership with other agencies to address anti-social behaviour, through Safer Neighbourhood Teams.</li> <li>○ Social landlords signed up to “Respect Standard” for housing management</li> <li>○ ASBOs successfully awarded and hundreds of ABCs issued</li> </ul>

ROTHERHAM PROUD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mixed tenure housing developments helping to build cohesive communities</li> <li>○ HMR improving town centres and gateway sites</li> <li>○ 2010 Rotherham extending active citizenship through Board and decision making structures</li> <li>○ Supporting People enabling more vulnerable people to receive support in their own homes</li> </ul>

FAIRNESS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ BME Housing Strategy and Supporting People Strategy produced</li> <li>○ Gypsy and Traveller joint needs assessment carried out</li> <li>○ New culturally specific housing under development (with Sadeh-Lok HA)</li> <li>○ Key Choices carries out regular ethnicity monitoring</li> <li>○ 2010 Rotherham undertaken tenant profiling</li> <li>○ More developments built to Lifetime Homes standard</li> </ul>

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Transform South Yorkshire and Rotherham housing strategies aligning job creation and housing growth</li> <li>○ All new homes built to sustainable development code level 3</li> <li>○ New housing development at Henley Rise produces zero carbon emissions</li> <li>○ Mixed tenure housing developments helping to build cohesive communities</li> <li>○ Local communities involved in place-shaping activities</li> </ul>

There are a number of other major corporate strategies that have informed the development of this strategy, and which have an interrelationship with this housing strategy. These include:

- Public Health Strategy
- Rural Strategy
- Sustainable Development Framework
- Town Centre Action Plan
- Older Persons Strategy
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Community Safety Strategy
- Local Development Framework
- Respect Action Plan
- Children and Young Peoples Plan
- Learning Disability Framework

Housing across all tenures has a significant contribution to make to the Rotherham Partnership Local Area Agreement (LAA). The existing LAA covers the period 2006-09 and sets out the “stretch targets” for areas of local priority. A new LAA has been developed for the period 2008-11, where our partners have considered the range of 198 National Performance Indicators (NPI’s) and identified the 50 of most importance to the Borough. Of the 34 non educational indicators there is a housing element/contribution to 18 of these. The 18 include the key indicators of net additional homes provided and number of affordable homes delivered.

In addition to the LAA, we are currently developing a Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) with neighbouring authorities and major local agencies. This is expected to be finalised during 2008.

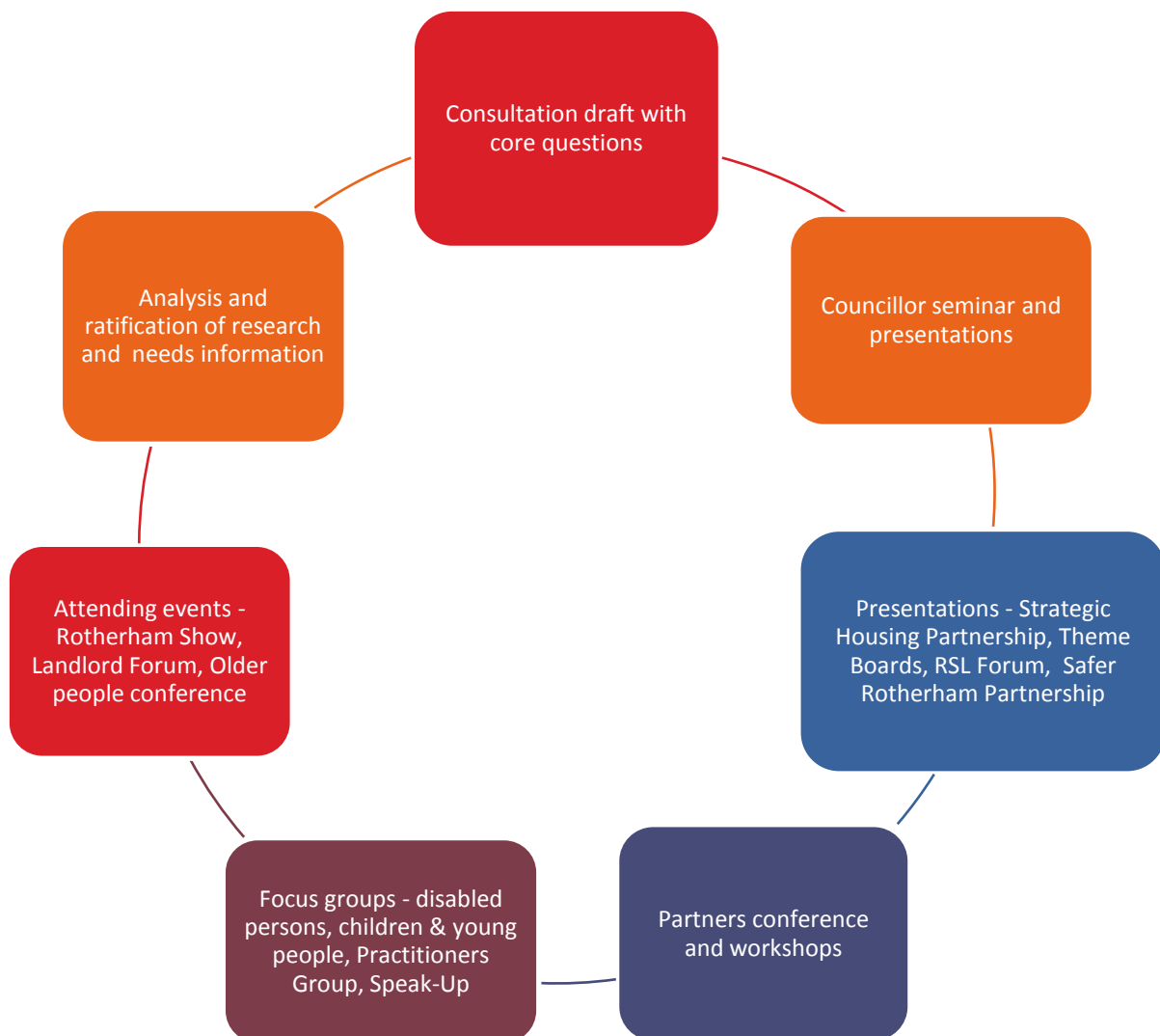


## Consultation

Development of this Housing Strategy has involved a programme of stakeholder consultation throughout the process. We want to ensure that residents and partners, are aware of and have had the chance to contribute to, this new Housing Strategy

In 2007, Rotherham's Cabinet agreed our Consultation Plan for the emerging strategy. The initial period of consultation was undertaken between August and October 2007, with a further round between January and March 2008.

The range of consultation activity is illustrated below:



The organisations, groups and people who participated in the consultation are listed below:

- Rotherham Cabinet
- Directors and senior Council officers from all departments
- Councillors
- Area Partnership Managers
- Rotherham Partnership Theme Managers
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd
- Rotherham Strategic Housing Partnership
- RSL Forum
- Private Landlords' Forum
- RotherFed (Rotherham Federation of Council Tenants)
- Rotherham Chamber of Commerce
- Rotherham Primary Care Trust
- South Yorkshire Police
- National Offender Management Service
- South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Government Office for Yorkshire and the Humber
- Yorkshire Forward
- Housing Corporation
- English Partnerships
- Transform South Yorkshire
- Public and private sector residents' associations
- Other service users
- Health and social care practitioners
- Developers and landowners
- Speak Up

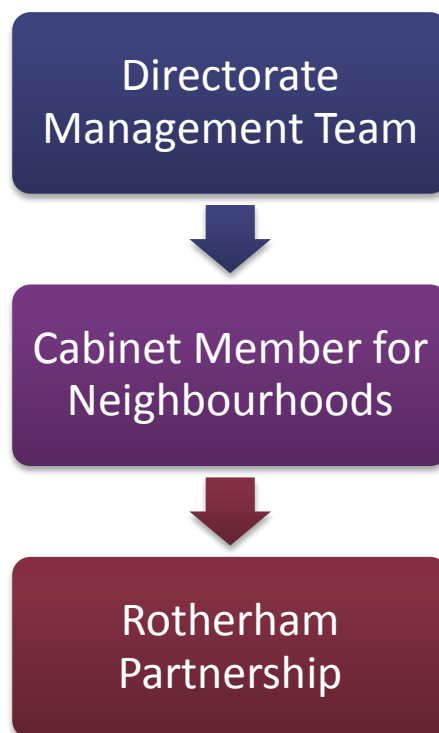
Consultation was broadly in support of the three key priorities/themes of the strategy, and of the main targets and actions. We received a large number of responses and comments from both partner organisations and other groups. The main issues have been grouped and summarised in the following table, with an analysis of our response and/or details of any changes that we have made to the strategy as a result.

Issue	Response
<b>1. Social Housing Provision</b>	
Lettings should support BME communities who wish to move outside Rotherham town centre.	Key Choices CBL enabling BME households to bid for any location. Regular ethnic monitoring carried out to ensure fair and equal access.
More bungalows needed to meet the needs of disabled and older people.	Included as a strategy target. New affordable housing bungalow provision being developed at Canklow and Ravenfield.
Common application form and procedure for all social housing in the borough.	Support for the principle. Key Choices now being extended to other tenures with one application process.
Additional tenancy support should be provided for new tenants, particularly younger tenants.	Additional tenancy support to prevent homelessness has been located within 2010 Rotherham Ltd – 2 new officers.
<b>2. New housing provision</b>	
There is a need for more four bedroom homes for larger families.	Agreed – and supported by SHMA 2007 findings. Larger family homes are being commissioned through new build and council stock extensions programme.
Rural areas – affordability needs to be addressed, particularly for younger families	Included within the Strategy as a target, and within Rotherham's Rural Housing Strategy 2007
More work needs to be done to raise awareness and understanding of shared ownership.	Agreed – A comprehensive action plan is being implemented to promote shared ownership.
Environmental considerations should be included in the design of new housing.	Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes now a requirement under our Interim Affordable Housing Planning Statement.
<b>3. Choice</b>	
More houses should be built to Lifetime Homes standards.	Agreed – and included as a strategy target.
Council houses with adaptations should be allocated to new tenants who need adaptations.	This is not always possible, as adaptations are individually specified and tailored.
There should be more security of tenure in the private sector.	We are working with accredited landlords to offer longer fixed term tenancies.
<b>4. Community safety</b>	
Crime and anti-social behaviour is ruining the perception and desirability of neighbourhoods	Community safety included as one of the key sections under the Quality Housing Theme

Alcohol misuse amongst young people is increasing.	Comment passed on to Safer Rotherham Partnership.
The Respect Standard for Housing Management should also apply to the private rented sector.	To be discussed with Private Landlords Forum – although would only be voluntary without national policy change.
There should be earlier intervention to prevent homelessness.	Agreed – and included in the strategy and the 2003-08 Homelessness Strategy. Rotherham is a top quartile performer for prevention of homelessness.
<b>5. Community facilities and involvement</b>	
There should be more provision of leisure facilities and youth clubs.	Agreed, and included in HMR and Place-shaping forward plans.
Dropped kerbs and crossings should be better planned.	Comment passed to HMR, Environment Service, and 2010 Rotherham Ltd.
More communication and feedback on housing initiatives such as HMR and new housing developments would be welcome.	Agreed – included in HMR and Neighbourhood Investment Team Business Plans.

An analysis of the initial consultation responses was received by Cabinet in November 2007. A further report was provided in June 2008, prior to formal adoption of the new strategy.

The strategy has now been formally approved and ratified by the following individuals and forums:



## Analysis of Housing Need

This section provides an outline of the main housing need issues experienced in Rotherham. It has been informed by a range of primary and secondary data sources, including a comprehensive Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), conducted in 2007. A more detailed version of this section is included at Appendix A.

### Context

Rotherham has a population of 254,000. This is projected to increase to 271,600 by 2021. Over the same period, average household size will reduce from 2.36 to 2.19, and the number of people over 60 years old will increase by 30%. This creates a sizeable increase in the total number of households in the Borough.

Average incomes in Rotherham are lower than both the regional and national average – which is a factor in households' ability to afford housing or exercise housing choice.

### The housing market

The table below shows price levels for Rotherham and for comparator areas. House prices in Rotherham are considerably below the national average, and slightly below the regional average.

Average House Prices (Source: Land Registry 2008)

Area	Ave price (£)	As % of Eng & Wales
England & Wales	185,616	100.0%
Rotherham	120,607	65.0%
Sheffield	140,003	75.4%
Yorkshire & Humber	148,385	79.9%

Between 2001 and 2006, the average house price in Rotherham rose by 99%, significantly above the national increase of 61% for the same period. The last ten years have seen house prices rise locally and nationally. At the time of writing in early 2008, there are signs that this may be about to change, with a global "credit crunch" beginning to take effect.

If housing costs are compared across tenures, a picture of relative affordability emerges (see table below). This clearly shows that there is an affordability gap between social renting and private renting, and a further gap between renting and owner-occupation.

#### Monthly outgoings by tenure (SHMA 2007)

Size	Social rent (£)	Private rent (£)	Owner occupation (£)
2 bedrooms	256	370	405
3 bedrooms	290	450	540

We know that many Rotherham households spend more than 25% of their income on housing costs. This is most pronounced in the social and private rented sectors (affecting over 60% of tenants).

### Projected housing needs

Using the DCLG-approved housing needs model we estimate an annual net housing need of 411 homes. Using data on housing size, income and prices, the SHMA suggests that 51.6% of this net need could be met through intermediate housing, with the remaining 48.4% via social rented provision.

The SHMA provides a sensitivity analysis to cover the event of prices falling by either 10% or 20%. This is quite a useful tool, given the financial climate of early 2008. The analysis assumes that the supply of affordable housing and income and savings levels will be unchanged.

Scenario	Net housing need
Prices unchanged	411
Prices fall by 10%	370
Prices fall by 20%	322
Rents fall by 10%	300
Prices and rents fall by 10%	259

Source SHMA 2007

The model also suggests that:

- There is an ongoing need for owner occupied housing
- There is a large unmet need for social rented and intermediate housing

- The main shortfall is in two-bedroom homes
- There is a potential surplus of three bedroom homes
- There is a small, but significant need for homes with four bedrooms or more

The SHMA also suggests that there is a disproportionate need for affordable housing in rural areas – due to a lack of supply, rather than non-affordability. A net annual rural need of 91 homes is recommended.

## Households with specific needs

This section covers the following groups:

- Black and minority ethnic households (BME)
- Gypsies and travellers
- Households with support needs

A more detailed issues and needs analysis for these groups can be found at Appendix A.

The headline issues in relation to housing needs for BME households and gypsies/travellers are:

- Rotherham's BME population is about 5.4% of the overall population. The largest single group are South Asian (including Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi households)
- Average family sizes of 4.64 for South Asian families are twice those of white British and other BME households
- South Asian families are more likely to be living in unsuitable housing
- Recent arrivals from EU accession states are concentrated in older, poor quality private rented homes in urban areas
- There is recognised need for a local authority site for gypsies and travellers

The following table shows the number of households with support needs.

Category	No of households	% of all households	% of households with support needs
Frail elderly	3,494	3.3%	18.9%
Physical/mobility impairment	13,017	12.2%	70.5%
Learning disability	1,208	1.1%	6.5%
Mental health	1,156	1.1%	6.3%
Severe sensory impairment	2,014	1.9%	10.9%
Non-visible condition	1,663	1.6%	9.0%
Other	80	0.1%	0.4%

Source – household survey data 2007

The main housing needs issues for these groups are:

- Meeting the housing requirements of an ageing population
- Allowing people to live independently for as long as possible
- A need for more extra-care residential schemes
- More than 50% of people on Rotherham’s Learning Disabilities Register will need supported accommodation in the future
- There is insufficient supported housing or floating support for people with mental health needs or physical/sensory disabilities



## Our Priorities

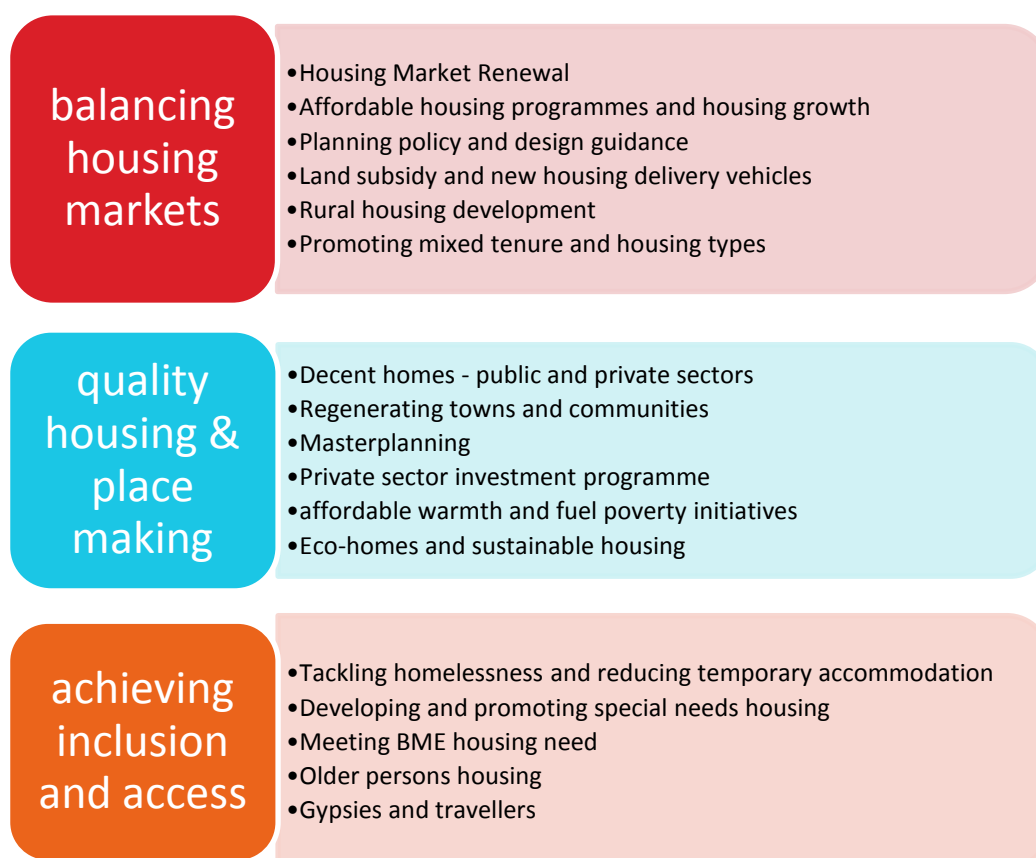
Our priorities for housing are set out in this section and form the main issues that will be addressed by this Housing Strategy and Action Plan. They have been agreed by the stakeholders and partner organisations described in the section on consultation.

### Priorities

We have identified three objectives/themes that will enable us to address the housing issues facing the borough. These are:

- Balancing housing markets
- Quality housing and place-making
- Achieving inclusion and access

These themes also mirror those in the sub-regional housing strategy developed by the Transform South Yorkshire consortium. This will enable us to translate plans and actions through from a local to a regional level, maximise investment and make the best use of resources available. The main strands of activity within the three thematic areas are shown in the following diagram.



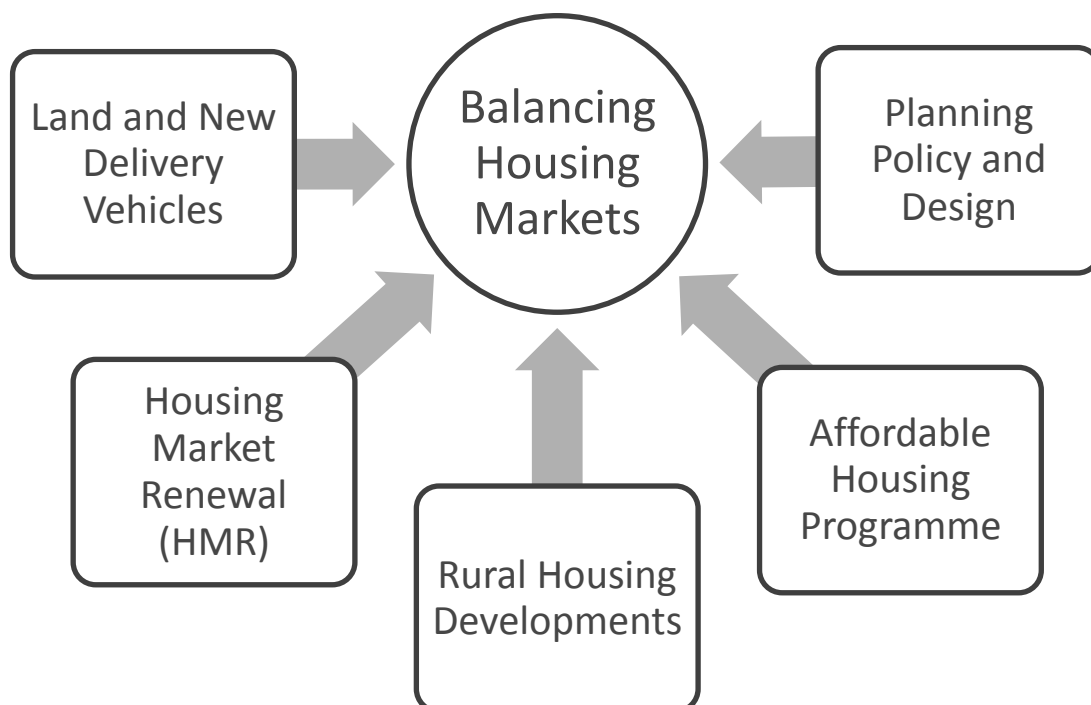
## Theme 1 – Balancing Housing Markets

In common with much of South Yorkshire, Rotherham’s housing market is characterised by marked differences between areas and communities. In some areas, overall prosperity is increasing and house prices are buoyant. However, there are still communities with high levels of multiple deprivation, and where house prices remain below the average for Rotherham and for South Yorkshire as a whole.

Balancing housing markets aims to address this, and to narrow the gap between communities. The Housing Market Strategy for South Yorkshire expects to deliver:

- **Aspirational housing** – which will attract higher income households to meet the demand created by the increase in higher income jobs; which reduces the environmental impact of travel to work; and contributes to the vision of mixed communities.
- **Affordable housing** – which meets the demand created by increases in lower skilled and middle-income jobs; and which enables progression through the market.
- **Regeneration in areas of market weakness** – tackling low demand, unpopular and obsolete housing and poor quality living environments.

These are also our aims for this “balancing housing markets” theme of the housing strategy. We are addressing through planned and co-ordinated activity under the following headings:



## Housing Market Renewal

South Yorkshire is the largest of nine Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinders, set up by the Government in 2004. The aim of the pathfinder programme was to tackle housing markets which were characterised by low housing demand and low housing prices.

The South Yorkshire HMR pathfinder area includes 140,000 households and covers both urban and rural communities. The pathfinder area in 2004 was characterised by:

- High incidence of multiple deprivation
- Poor quality housing stock, across all tenures
- Low levels of in-migration
- Socio-economic polarisation and spatial inequalities

The three main objectives of the South Yorkshire HMR are:

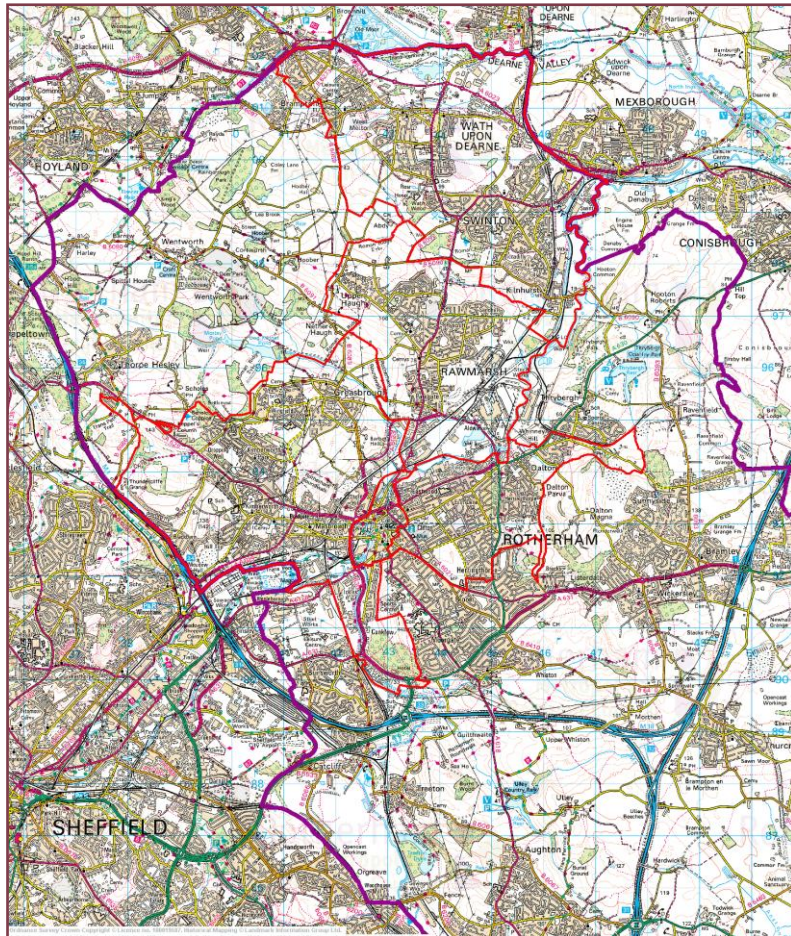
- Improve the character and diversity of neighbourhoods
- Grow the area's housing range
- Improve housing quality – all tenures

The targeted priorities for action in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase (2004/08) were: to remove and replace the worst housing; refurbish stock that has a long-term future; to enhance the public realm; and to bring life back to neighbourhood centres. For Rotherham these priorities have been the focus of HMR activity over the last four years.

Geographically, HMR in Rotherham covers two main areas:

- The Sheffield/Rotherham Axis (including the M1 corridor) – formerly dominated by declining industrial zones poor quality housing
- The Dearne Valley Axis (Between Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley) – a former coalmining area with high degrees of multiple deprivation

These are shown on the following map:



Map of Rotherham HMR areas (Ordnance Survey data)

## Removing and replacing the worst housing

Over the last few years, we have cleared empty, poor quality and low demand housing in:

- Dalton
- Kiveton Park
- Laughton Common
- Canklow
- Wath
- Five former sheltered housing schemes
- Ad-hoc dispersed sites

Our Neighbourhood Investment Team (formerly Rotherham HMR Team) has also acquired a number of strategic sites, including Westgate Chambers in the town centre and the Clarence Hotel in Rawmarsh.

New housing has been developed on several sites, including the Canklow site - in a new mixed tenure scheme which received a CABE "good" rating for design. Of the 270 new affordable homes provided through our 2006-08 affordable housing programme, the majority are in HMR areas.

**Phase 2 of the HMR programme covers 2008-11. During this period we will:**

- **Undertake further clearance at Rawmarsh and Dalton.**
- **Develop new housing on previously cleared and acquired sites, and at other strategic sites. These include 200 homes on the White Bear site in Wath; 400 new homes at Chesterhill, and 400 homes at Lakeside, Dearne Valley.**
- **Purchase and redevelop long-term empty private sector homes in HMR areas.**
- **Develop innovative new housing schemes in acquired town centre sites, as part of the multi-million multi agency regeneration of the centre of Rotherham.**

#### **Refurbishing stock with a long-term future**

We have successfully aligned the HMR programme with 2010 Rotherham Ltd's decent homes investment programme. A Joint Project Board has been established, which assesses all planned works to Council homes in the HMR zone. Using a traffic light system we have been able to identify properties to avoid carrying out unnecessary works, or to co-ordinate decent homes and HMR investment.

An example of this is the 2007 Asset Management Review of Non-traditional Stock. This was commissioned jointly between 2010 Rotherham Ltd and the Council's Neighbourhood Investment Team, to assess the potential for remodelling of existing homes, or demolition and rebuild.

A good example of private sector refurbishment is our first Living over the Shop (LOTS) development, at College Street in Rotherham town centre. This has remodelled commercial floor space above a retail outlet to provide ten new units for low cost home ownership.

**Over the period 2008-11 we will:**

- **Commence a joint re-modelling programme to Council stock. This programme will involve decent homes work, allied to extensions to create larger family homes. The scheme will involve innovative elements, such as off-site construction, and eco-homes initiatives, such as green roofs.**

- **Agree and implement a programme of works to remodel and/or rebuild non-traditional council housing**

### Enhancing the Public Realm

Since 2004, we have delivered projects throughout the HMR area to enhance the public realm and to improve community safety. These include:

- Gateway/corridor projects – involving improvements to parking, traffic flow, lighting, and creating new defensible space arrangements. The A633 Meadowbank Road corridor has won plaudits from local residents' groups.
- Green spaces – improving access and security, providing new equipment, and installing CCTV. Local pride has improved at a number of locations. At Rosehill Park, the park warden was nominated for, and won, a national park ranger award.
- Shopping centres – improving parking and access, new signage and street furniture. A successful scheme at Rawmarsh resulted in increased retail use and improved public feedback.
- Community safety improvements – such as alley gating programmes in Eastwood and Clifton, and roll-out of CCTV in partnership with the local Safer Neighbourhoods Teams.

Over the period 2008-11 we will:

- **Continue our planned programme of public realm and community safety programmes.**
- **Commence major improvements, including new mixed commercial and residential provision, at Bellows Road, Rawmarsh**
- **Carry out major environmental improvements to estates including Monkwood**
- 



## Regenerating Neighbourhood Centres

We have already carried out improvements to a number of neighbourhood centres that were previously in decline, experiencing issues of crime and community safety, low usage and poor public perception. Schemes have included baseline profiling, design studies, improved streetscapes and public spaces, and new commercial buildings. Works at Rawmarsh and Kimberworth Park are already well-developed.

We have developed spatial masterplans for other neighbourhoods, such as Eastwood, Brampton and Canklow.

### Over the period 2008-11 we will:

- Invest over £50 million in mixed use redevelopment of Rotherham town centre. This includes new mixed tenure family accommodation, promoting a new vision for urban living.
- Roll out neighbourhood master planning to the South of the Borough – in Maltby and Dinnington.
- Take forward the urban centre masterplans that were developed in 2006/07.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive action plan following the review of HRA commercial portfolio.

## Resources

Funding for HMR projects comes from a variety of sources, and includes public and private sector investment. Rotherham received £28 million HMR pathfinder funding during the period 2004-08, and has been allocated a further £27 million for phase 2 (2008-11).

HMR funding has been aligned with other major funding streams to maximise impact within neighbourhoods and to achieve optimal value for money. Most of our National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP) allocation for 2006-08 of £13.4 million was targeted on projects in the HMR area, delivering over 250 new homes. And 2010 Rotherham Ltd's decent homes programme has been co-ordinated within the HMR area, allowing joint programmes to be delivered.

## Evaluation

We believe that the HMR pathfinder has been particularly successful within Rotherham – neighbourhoods are being transformed, housing is being improved, and well-designed high quality

new homes are being delivered. The 2008-11 HMR programme aims to build on this success with an acceleration of housebuilding and regeneration of urban centres.

The Transform South Yorkshire partnership is responsible for co-ordinating the overall South Yorkshire HMR pathfinder. They receive monthly returns from each authority and evaluate progress against a range of indicators and market information.

Our programme is also assessed robustly by:

- The Audit Commission, who review the programme every six months. Their most recent assessment rated the South Yorkshire pathfinder as performing adequately in most areas, but well in facilitating homes and mixed communities and strongly in terms of place-shaping
- We carry out regular market analyses – these show that house prices have increased since 2005 in Rotherham’s HMR area, and
- Developer and commercial confidence is improving
- We survey local residents on a regular basis – public perception and confidence continues to improve

Finally, CURS (Birmingham University) conducted a mid-term evaluative study of our HMR programme last year, involving primary research with a range of stakeholders. They were able to show success against a range of indices, including house prices, land values, consumer perceptions and private sector confidence.

## Planning Policy and Design

Fundamental to our overall approach to balancing housing markets is to create the right conditions and regulatory environment. The planning system has the potential to help deliver the right mix of housing, and to maximise the amount of housing (including affordable housing) that is built. In Rotherham, housing and planning officers work well in partnership to create a planning and design system that can deliver our housing market ambitions effectively.

### Planning targets

We have been able to increase our planning requirements for affordable housing. The Council now requires at least 25% affordable housing on all sites in the borough capable of producing 15 homes or more. This increase is in line with the Regional Spatial Strategy, and a significant increase from the previous target of 15% on sites of 25 units or more (and only 7.5% in HMR areas).



This move will allow us to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing to meet the housing need identified in the housing needs analysis. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment, suggests a target for the proportion of social rented and intermediate housing within the 25% overall affordable housing target. The suggested target is:

- 56% social rented
- 44% low cost home/ shared ownership

On sites capable of larger scale developments, we will be seeking an additional 10% intermediate housing as part of the market percentage (housing that does not meet our affordability criteria but is priced below market level).

We commissioned Bristol University to conduct a Housing Viability Study in 2007. They looked at available sites of all sizes and locations across Rotherham. They were able to conclude that the new 25% affordable housing target is deliverable at all locations.

We have recently developed a new Interim Planning Statement for Affordable Housing. This was produced jointly between housing and planning, and sets standards for the design and quality of all new affordable homes. The standard stipulates:

- New affordable homes should attain Level 3 of the new Code for Sustainable Homes, or better
- Achieving Lifetimes Homes standards
- Meeting the Housing Corporation's Design Quality Standard
- Secured by Design, to address crime and safety issues

We are presently consulting partners and stakeholders on the new Statement, and expect it to be formally adopted in Summer 2008.

**Over the period 2008-11 we will:**

- **Monitor delivery against our new affordable housing targets**
- **Implement our new Interim Planning Statement for Affordable Housing (July 2008)**
- **Ensure that we meet the 100% lifetime homes commitment for affordable housing in the recent national Lifetime Homes Lifetime Neighbourhoods strategy**
- **Appoint two planning experts to work within the Neighbourhood Investment Team in Housing.**

## Design quality

At Rotherham we have been pro-active in putting design at the forefront of our housing activities. Our actions to promote and develop good design standards to date include:

- Working with CABE to promote and develop new design standards for all sectors of the built environment.
- Establishing a “Design Champion” and an in-house Design Team within our Neighbourhood Investment service.
- Delivering a design training programme for officers, councillors and other partner organisations
- Producing design guides and masterplans for urban centres, including Canklow, Rawmarsh, and Eastwood

As a result, we have begun to improve the built environment across the borough. A recent housing development in Canklow attained a CABE “good” rating for its design, and at Henley Rise, a new eco-housing scheme developed by South Yorkshire Housing Association attained the CABE “very good” status.

As part of the multi-agency long-term plan to regenerate Rotherham town centre, in 2007 we produced a comprehensive Design Code in advance of the programme, to ensure that design was at the forefront. We believe that this is the first such design code of its type.



**Over the period 2008-11 we will:**

- **Produce further masterplans and design guides for urban centres, including Maltby and Dinnington**
- **Start a new Design Panel for residential developments**
- **Continue to train staff and stakeholders in the latest design guidance**
- **Ensure that high quality design is incorporated in all new housing developments**
- **Use good design principles to deliver more sustainable homes, for instance by using green roofs, water recycling, flood defences, and off-site construction techniques**

## **Affordable Housing Programme**

We have had considerable success in increasing the size of our affordable housing programme over the last few years, and we are working towards delivering our RSS and SHMA targets of over 400 new affordable homes per year by 2011.

We are aware that the RSS targets represent a considerable increase in affordable housing output for Rotherham. We must continue to accelerate the rate of affordable housing growth in order to reach these ambitious growth targets.

### **Programme delivery**

Our NAHP grant from the Housing Corporation increased from £2 million in the early 2000s, to £12 million for the 2006-08 housing programme, as a result of our HMR programme and our ability to deliver high quality housing schemes within deadline. This was reflected in a further £1.4 million that we received during 2006-08 through in-year bids.

Our 2006-08 programme is delivering 270 new affordable homes – most of which are within the HMR area, a result of our policy of aligning different funding streams where possible. The programme includes a mix of general needs housing and other specialist housing, including:

- Six new larger family homes for BME households – developed by Sadeh-Lok HA at the former Ferham School site
- 18 new dispersed one and two bedroom homes for move-on from supported housing – developed by Arches HA, who are providing high quality housing on constrained sites.

Our policy is to ensure mixed tenure developments wherever possible. This is reflected in our planning policy of 25% affordable housing, with a mix of shared ownership and social rented housing forming the affordable quotient.

For the 2008-11 programme we have been allocated an initial £7.8 million from the Housing Corporation. This only represents 40% of the programme, due to the imminent handover of national responsibilities to the new Homes and Communities Agency. We would also expect to receive further in year bids as the programme progresses.

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Deliver the 2008-11 affordable housing programme in full, on time, and deliver 100% spend against budget**
- **Deliver large scale developments at the following sites – 250 new homes in Wath (White Bear – 104 Affordable homes and 101 at open market value), 200 homes at Chesterhill, and 200 homes at Lakeside, Dearne Valley**
- **Undertake the clearance and redevelopment of unsustainable housing in Eastwood and remodel existing homes where appropriate to deliver a wider housing offer that reflects local needs**
- **Deliver new rural affordable homes on five sites at Thurcroft**
- **Work with government other agencies and partner housing associations to maximise the amount of affordable housing investment**



## Housing association preferred partners

In 2007 we undertook a housing association preferred partner selection process. We selected seven partners to work with the Council on all new grant-funded housing developments. The benefits to Rotherham from this approach are:

- The successful HAs have all been assessed as having a good track record in development, housing management, design quality, and strategic vision
- All partners will have local expertise and a significant local presence
- Partners will sign up to agreed standards and guidance, such as Fair Access housing protocol, planning statements and design codes
- Partners will add value through community capacity building, training and skills development, and s106 negotiations
- Partners will help to develop more economically marginal infill sites as part of the wider development package
- We monitor partners' performance across a range of activities – including site management, housing management, customer service etc.

The Seven partners are:



**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Deliver the 2008-11 NAHP funded programme through our seven preferred partners**
- **Promote the use of our preferred partners for s106 funded developments**

## Shared ownership and intermediate housing

Our planning targets and affordable housing programme will be delivering a step change in the provision of intermediate housing. This is in line with the Regional Spatial Strategy and the recommendations of our Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Intermediate housing allows us to plug the gap between social rented housing and market rate housing (owner occupied and private rented). In the case of shared ownership, it allows households to own a home when they may be otherwise unable to do so.

Potentially we could deliver nearly 200 new shared ownership homes every year by 2011, offering households an opportunity to join the housing ladder. However, this aspect of our housing programme is not without its risks. This is because:

- Intermediate housing is a relatively new product within South Yorkshire, and demand levels are uncertain
- There is only a relatively small price margin between new build shared ownership and entry level second hand home ownership (compared with the South East, for example)

### **We will be addressing this issue through:**

- **Working with HA partners to evaluate local demand for shared ownership**
- **Looking at the feasibility of reducing equity stakes to less than 50%**
- **Developing targeted marketing and publicity strategies**
- **Working with financial institutions and the Council of Mortgage Lenders to identify and promote suitable mortgage packages**
- **Exploring other intermediate housing vehicles, such as sub-market renting**

## New Housing Delivery Vehicles

In addition to providing affordable housing through the traditional grant funded route, we are using and evaluating other methods for delivering new housing, and hence accelerating housing delivery in Rotherham. This approach is essential if we are to meet our RSS and SHMA targets of over 400 new affordable homes per year. Failure to accelerate housing growth will have knock on effects in other areas of Rotherham's ongoing development, given the projected increases in inward migration and job creation.

We are committed to accomplishing this additional growth through harnessing other funding streams and through land subsidy (either partial or 100%). Other funding streams include:

- Section 106 planning gain
- NHS capital resources
- Carbon Trust funding
- RSL reserves
- Private finance

We have already had some notable successes in delivering new housing through these routes. Examples include:

- Using land subsidy to develop on a former derelict site at Henley Rise. South Yorkshire HA delivered a scheme of 23 general needs mixed tenure homes. The homes meet Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Housing (i.e. zero carbon emissions) and have been awarded a Building for Life gold star.
- Developing 8 new Living over the Shop units in the centre of Rotherham, for low cost home ownership
- Developing two new extra care housing schemes, at Oak Trees and Potteries Court, using NHS resources

Over the next five years we plan to increase housing output through new vehicles, using three main methods:

- Section 106 Planning Gain – we will be enforcing affordable housing targets, following the SHMA and Bristol University Study. We will insist wherever possible that affordable housing is integrated into the main site, rather than developed separately. We have already been successful with this approach at the White Bear site in Wath.
- Developing special needs and older persons housing. We are able to lever in other funding sources, such as NHS capital, and often combine this with redevelopment of low demand and obsolete sheltered housing sites. We will use this method to deliver more extra care schemes and new models of supported housing, such as bungalows for people with learning disabilities.
- Using surplus public sector land. Rotherham's Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods agreed a report in March 2008, which set out a number of preferred options for developing public sector sites at various locations within the borough. We will be taking forward some exploratory schemes over the next 2-3 years. These include one-off partnerships to develop small infill sites; and developing larger-scale consortia for medium and large sites (which could eventually follow the new Local Housing Company model).

We will be involving the new Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) when developing these initiatives, seeking their advice, guidance and support.

## Rural Housing Development

Our SHMA indicated that there is an under-supply of affordable housing in rural areas. This has the potential for lower and middle income households to migrate out of these areas, which would have an adverse effect on our ability to sustain mixed and balanced rural communities.

To tackle this we developed our 2007 Rural Housing Strategy. Its three main aims are:

- Improved housing choice and affordability
- Housing developments that reflect the needs and aspirations of rural communities
- Improved quality of life for people living in rural areas

Over the next few years we will be implementing the strategy, and the major recommendations for rural housing from the 2007 SHMA.

### **Our main activities will be:**

- **Conducting a review of all possible development and infill sites in rural areas**
- **Carrying out targeted empty property initiatives in rural areas, including acquisition and redevelopment**
- **Creating a Rural Housing Enabler Post (via the Countryside Agency)**
- **Examining possible Rural Exception Policy areas for planning targets (such as reducing affordable housing site thresholds)**
- **Developing new rural affordable housing through our housing development programme – we already have schemes agreed and funded at five sites**



## Theme 1 – Balancing Housing Markets

### Summary of Key Actions

#### Housing Market Renewal

- continue the HMR clearance and acquisitions programme – re-developing sites for mixed uses with high quality schemes
- Develop hundreds of new homes in key neighbourhoods
- Continue to improve and regenerate urban centres, including Rotherham centre
- Roll-out public realm improvements in areas such as Eastwood and Clifton

#### Planning and design

- Implement the new Affordable Housing Planning Statement
- Develop masterplans and design guides for urban centres, including Maltby and Dinnington
- Promote sustainable design in new housing schemes

#### Affordable housing programme

- Work to delivering 411 affordable homes per year
- Deliver the 2008-11 affordable housing programme
- Remodel housing estates in Eastwood, including new housing provision
- Improve the output and uptake of intermediate housing, including shared ownership
- Promote the use of housing association partners wherever possible

#### New delivery vehicles

- Maximise the amount of new affordable housing provided through s106 planning gain
- Continue to use cross-funding to deliver innovative special needs and older persons housing schemes
- Develop effective delivery partnerships to develop housing on surplus public sector land

#### Rural housing

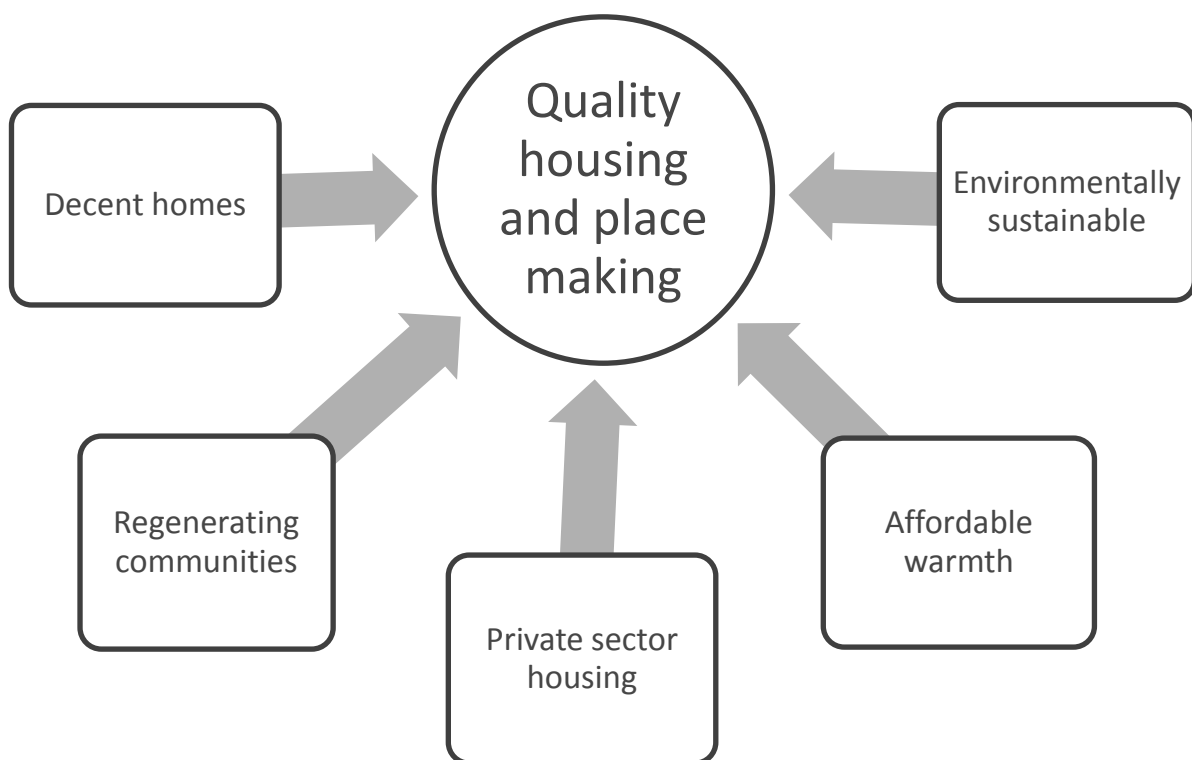
- Deliver new affordable housing in rural areas through our development programme
- Review rural sites and planning targets
- Implement our rural empty property programme

## Theme 2 – Quality Housing and Place-Making

Our vision for this theme – echoing that of the South Yorkshire Sustainable Housing Market Strategy, can be encapsulated as:

*“ensuring that our homes are fit for future generations – not just in good condition, but of the highest quality, and in attractive, safe neighbourhoods”*

The priority areas for this theme are set out in the diagram below:



### Decent Homes

Making sure that every household has a home that is in decent condition is an essential requirement. It is also one of the main planks of Government policy. The 2010 decent homes target has been the catalyst for major changes to the delivery of local authority housing. In Rotherham, decent homes were the key factor in residents’ decision to create an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO), 2010 Rotherham Ltd.

## Local authority stock

In 2005, when 2010 Rotherham Ltd was created, the level of non-decency in council housing stood at 74%. This was due to a number of factors:

- Structural lack of investment
- Significant proportion of dwellings built through non-traditional methods
- High proportion of homes built after 1919

The decent homes programme is now in its fourth year, and has reduced the level of non-decency to 47.64% (March 2008). Success has been achieved through:

- Targeting renewable elements – boilers, kitchens, bathrooms
- One-off programmes to the external fabric of buildings
- Effective partnering contracts for large elements of the programme – with effective supply chain management
- Focusing on spatial programmes, only visiting each area once, where possible
- Aligning the programme with other funding, such as HMR

Year	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11
Local auth funds (£ million)	17.5	16.5	16.0	15.5	14.4	14.8
Decent homes funds (£ million)	7.5	45.0	50.0	55.0	52.0	9.4
Total programme (£ million)	25.0	61.5	66.0	70.5	66.4	24.2

The decent homes programme is on course to hit the 2010/11 target for achieving 100% decency. However, this is dependent on a number of factors, including 2010 Rotherham retaining its 2 stars at Audit Commission re-inspection in June 2008, and the Government releasing decent homes funding.

We have already commenced a project to examine the future for local authority housing in Rotherham. A multi-agency working party (including tenants and residents) is meeting to consider whether the ALMO model will be best for Rotherham after the 2010/11 when the existing contract expires. The project is also examining options to diversify the portfolio of responsibilities of the managing agent from 2010 onwards.

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Work with 2010 Rotherham Ltd to complete the decent homes investment programme**
- **Help 2010 Rotherham Ltd to attain 2 stars at re-inspection**
- **Continue to ensure value for money through effective partnering arrangements**
- **Decide on the future management of Council stock after 2010**

**Private sector decent homes**

In 2007, we developed a new Private Sector Housing Strategy. One of its key strategic aims is to:

*“improve the condition of private sector stock and ensure progress towards decent homes and HHSRS targets”*

Our 2008 Private Sector condition survey estimates that only 20.7% of homes in the private sector are non-decent. This shows good progress and is partially due to our success in:

- Implementing Home Appreciation Loans – helping home owners increase the value of their properties through improvement works
- Improving standards in the rented sector through advice and our Landlords Accreditation Scheme
- Carrying out minor works for elderly households
- Warm Front grants for energy efficiency improving more than 2000 homes

However, the cost of remedying the 20.7% remaining private sector non-decency is still over £3,000 per home, or £54 million in total. Our approach, in line with national policy, is to target the most vulnerable households.

The Government’s private sector decent homes target is that by 2010, 70% of homes with vulnerable occupants should meet the decent homes standard. Our recent private sector condition survey found that Rotherham has already met this target – our figure is 75.8% decency for vulnerable households.

We can still improve on this, though. Targeted improvements at central heating and insulation will be most effective in tackling non-decency, and will also help address fuel poverty. We will also continue to help home-owners to release funds to improve their homes.

## Regenerating Communities

One of our main objectives in Rotherham is to narrow the gap between more prosperous communities and those with higher levels of deprivation. We also want to improve the quality of life for all residents who live or work in Rotherham.

Some of our urban centres and neighbourhoods suffered during the industrial and economic decline of the 80s and 90s. We have been working with our partners and through the Rotherham Partnership to transform these areas – bringing back businesses, improving homes, addressing crime and community safety, and restoring a real sense of community and civic pride.

Within housing we are leading a number of project streams aimed at improving neighbourhoods and shaping places.

### Housing Market Renewal

Our HMR initiatives involve targeted initiatives to improve communities, creating the right environment for housing growth and developing sustainable communities. These initiatives are described in detail in Theme 1 – balancing housing markets. Projects include:

- Clearance and acquisitions
- Gateway and corridor schemes
- Public realm and green space projects
- Improvements to neighbourhood and retail centres
- Improving the design quality of new commercial and residential developments

### Place-shaping

We have created a new “place-shaping” team within our Neighbourhood Investment Service. The service aims to co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to intervention in Rotherham’s most deprived neighbourhoods. The vision centres on the concept of “whole-life” neighbourhoods, where people have choice, access to amenities and services, jobs, and the ability to be involved in their local community.

Initial target areas include the towns of Maltby and Dinnington, and neighbourhoods within the HMR area, such as Eastwood and Chesterhill. Projects undertaken so far include:

- Developing community involvement structures – around place-shaping activity programmes

- Neighbourhood profiling – building up a comprehensive understanding of each individual neighbourhood
- Developing neighbourhood Masterplans – with all partners signing up to co-ordinated implementation
- Raising publicity and awareness – through newsletters, workshops, community days, and other events
- Developing community-led social enterprise projects – such as Garden 100, a gardening and grounds maintenance service provided by people with learning disabilities
- Public and community art projects – in several neighbourhoods, including the high-profile Aldwarke Acorn

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Roll-out the Implementation Plans for Dinnington and Maltby**
- **Conduct baseline studies for smaller neighbourhoods – including Kiveton Park, Wentworth, and Harthill**
- **Develop an action plan for tackling empty residential and commercial property in targeted neighbourhoods**
- **Commence a programme of inter-generational activities, to help build community cohesion**

**Crime and community safety**

Although Rotherham as a whole has relatively low levels of recorded crime (2006 Quality of Life Survey), fear of crime and community safety is still high on many residents' lists of priorities. It is also central to the Council's ambitions, with "Rotherham Safe" as one of the five main Community Strategy priorities.

The Council has an effective multi-agency Safer Rotherham Partnership, set up jointly with South Yorkshire Police, and reporting in to the main Rotherham Partnership. Their focus since 2007 has been on reducing fear of crime, tackling vulnerable localities, and addressing the needs of young people.

Housing-based programmes are central to achieving many of Rotherham's community safety priorities. As the largest single landlord, 2010 Rotherham Ltd has been pro-active in crime and safety initiatives. In partnership with the Council and the Police they have developed Safer Neighbourhood Teams in 2006, which are working across many of the council's estates. An example of this is the

Chesterhill Project. A twelve month programme of multi-agency intervention has seen anti-social behaviour fall by 70%, a 50% reduction in recorded crime, and more families beginning parenting programmes.

Other community safety initiatives relating to housing include:

- All social housing providers have signed up to the “Respect” standard for housing management
- CCTV, alley gating and lighting improvements to a number of neighbourhoods through the HMR programme
- Over 1200 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs) issued
- Five crack house closure orders granted
- Joint neighbourhood management schemes – organised around the seven Area Assemblies
- Tackling long-term empty property through acquisitions and redevelopment
- New housing built to “secure by design” standards

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Continue to improve neighbourhoods through HMR initiatives**
- **Increase the amount of housing built to secured by design standards**
- **Work with 2010 Rotherham Ltd to strengthen Safer Neighbourhood Teams and estate based initiatives**
- **Roll out empty property work to smaller neighbourhood centres through the place-shaping team**

### **Town centre renaissance**

At Rotherham we are embarking on a major project to redevelop and re-populate our town centre. The programme, which will take 15 years to complete, will transform the historic town centre, retaining much of its original character, whilst developing high quality, design-led new retail centres, residential accommodation and public spaces.

Housing has been at the forefront of this groundbreaking urban renaissance project. The first phase of works will involve improved “gateway” sites and regeneration of the riverside area of the town. One key aspect is the re-population of the town centre, with family-sized and one bedroom homes, mainly above existing and new commercial premises. We have already delivered the first scheme, a Living over the Shop initiative of apartments for low-cost home ownership.

In 2007 we developed a new Design Guide for the town centre, setting out design guidance and examples for streetscapes, public realm and new buildings. We believe that this comprehensive guide is the first of its kind, and will be a major factor in creating the urban environment that is envisioned.

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Develop a comprehensive town centre residential strategy**
- **Continue to acquire strategic town centre sites for acquisition and redevelopment**
- **Develop new high density housing schemes within the town centre – above commercial premises where possible**
- **Work with partners to promote excellent design in all new housing schemes**



## Private Sector Housing

The main private sector housing issues that we need to tackle are:

- Increasing the supply of housing
- Tackling unfit, decent homes and using the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System
- Improving standards and quality in the private rented sector



- Reducing the number of empty homes
- Promoting and enabling independent living

In 2007, we developed a new comprehensive Private Sector Housing Strategy which addresses these issues, and which pulls together existing strands of activity. As already mentioned in this chapter, we are making good progress tackling non-decency in the private sector. There have already been other notable successes in recent years, including:

- New planning policies for housing design, across all tenures
- Working closely with private sector developers to promote high quality housing development and mixed tenure schemes
- A new Landlords Accreditation Scheme (commenced 2006), which is helping to raise standards of accommodation in the private rented sector
- Improved SAP ratings for energy efficiency due to targeted multi-agency programmes
- A new Home Appreciation Loan scheme – helping home-owners to improve their properties
- Development of a one-stop housing advice centre in the centre of Rotherham
- A new bond scheme, Robond, to help people on low incomes into the private rented sector

Private sector resources come from a range of sources, including HMR, local authority capital receipts, and the Regional Housing Pot.

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Deliver projects totalling £34.2 million on private sector housing initiatives**
- **Target our activities where there is most need - vulnerable households, the private rented sector, and houses built before 1919**
- **Develop a programme of extensions and conversions to existing private sector homes**
- **Increase the number of home owner loans we provide to owner occupiers**
- **Increase the number of landlords in our Accredited Landlords' Scheme**
- **Increase the number of empty homes brought back into use through enforcement powers**

## Affordable Warmth and Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty is defined as occurring when a household needs to spend 10% or more of their income on basic energy needs, such as heating, lighting and power. The 2001 Census allows us to estimate

that there were as many as 13,300 people in fuel poverty in Rotherham in that year. Fuel poverty has a recognised detrimental effect on health and well-being, accidents, mental illness and social isolation.

This alone would make it imperative for us to tackle this issue. But fuel poverty is also a major contributory factor to climate change due to increased energy use and greenhouse gas emissions. Thus, at Rotherham we take affordable warmth very seriously indeed.

We have developed a multi-agency Affordable Warmth Strategy 2007-10. Members of the partnership that developed the strategy included: Rotherham Council; Rotherham Primary Care Trust; Age Concern; Rotherham Credit Union; 2010 Rotherham Ltd; National Energy Action; and South Yorkshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre. The strategic vision is for:

*“affordable warmth for all Rotherham households by 2016”*

Whilst this is a challenging target, we have already gone some considerable way to achieving it, with a comprehensive programme of activities in recent years:

- There have been over 4,500 referrals to Warm Front for energy advice and assistance
- Over 2,000 households have received new boilers and/or insulation packages as a result of our Save N Warm scheme
- Frontline staff have been trained on energy awareness and advice
- A sub-regional energy efficiency initiative, Hotspots South Yorkshire was launched in 2007
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd has improved the energy efficiency of over 7,000 council-owned homes through its decent homes programme
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd took part in a Government’s pilot for producing Energy Performance Certificates for social homes and has already produced over 1400 certificates

**These activities will be accelerated over the next 2-3 years. Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Develop all new affordable housing to meet Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable homes, or better – thus reducing energy loss and carbon emissions**
- **Increase energy advice referrals by 20%**
- **Complete the decent homes programme to all Council stock**
- **Link affordable warmth planning to extreme weather warning systems**
- **Improve publicity and public awareness of affordable warmth issues and initiatives**
- **Target homes in the private rented sector and dwellings built before 1919**

## Environmentally sustainable housing

In 2007 the Government produced “Building for a Greener Future”, which set out targets for all new homes to be zero carbon producing by 2016. This was followed in early 2008 by the new Code for Sustainable Homes – illustrating the national importance of environmental sustainability for housing. Environmental sustainability is one of Rotherham’s core objectives, and our recent track record in housing shows the strides that we have made:

- Through South Yorkshire we have developed a new housing scheme at Henley Rise that is the first in Rotherham to be carbon neutral (Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes). The development of 23 new general needs homes has already won awards for its design and eco-housing approach.
- We are developing new homes on former council housing sites that have a range of green initiatives, including green roofs and water recycling
- Our new Interim Affordable Housing Planning Statement will require all new affordable homes to be Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Housing (or better)
- Our neighbourhood masterplans all incorporate environmental sustainability initiatives
- Our multi-agency approach to energy efficiency is reducing carbon emissions from thousands of existing homes
- 2010 Rotherham are improving the thermal comfort and energy efficiency of thousands of local authority homes via their decent homes programme

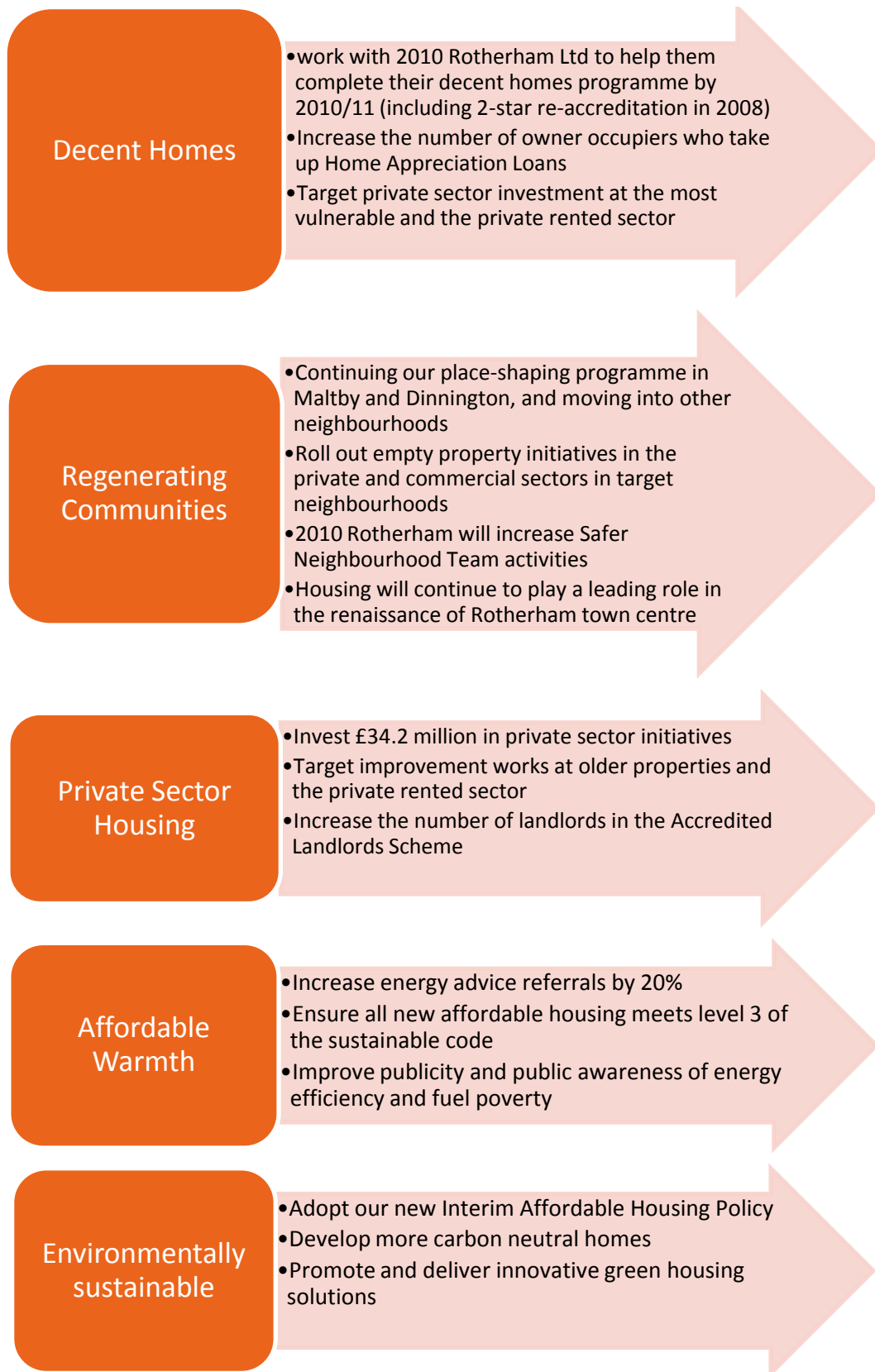
A team from Sheffield Hallam University are engaged in ongoing monitoring and analysis of many of our environmental sustainability initiatives (particularly the Henley Rise development). Their research will enable us to identify and fine-tune the most effective products and systems for use in future housing developments.

### Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- **Formally adopt and enforce our new Affordable Housing Planning Statement**
- **Increase outputs from our affordable warmth and decent homes programmes**
- **Work with developers and partner housing associations to promote zero-carbon housing**
- **Develop more housing schemes that attain Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes**
- **Continue to work with Sheffield Hallam University on evaluation of our ecological initiatives**

## Theme 2 – Quality Housing and Place-Making

### Summary of Key Actions

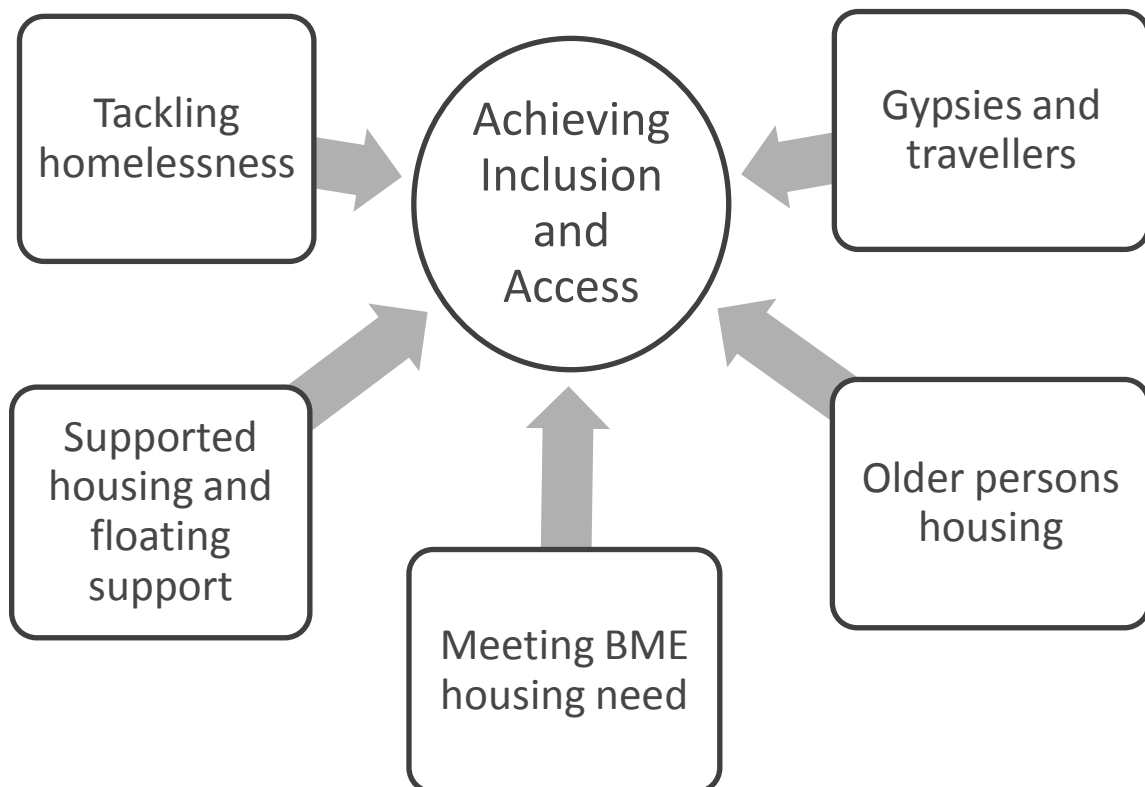


## Theme 3 – Achieving Inclusion and Access

This theme cuts across the two previous themes, and indeed across all areas of our housing activities. Our aim is to provide appropriate housing and related support options which allow everyone to be included as part of their community. We want to enable independent living, and to target support towards those who are most vulnerable.

There are a range of needs, experienced by a range of communities, groups and households – and highlighted in the chapter on housing needs. This chapter sets out how we are addressing these needs and how we will be developing our services over the period of this strategy.

The main areas for action, intervention and investment are set out below:



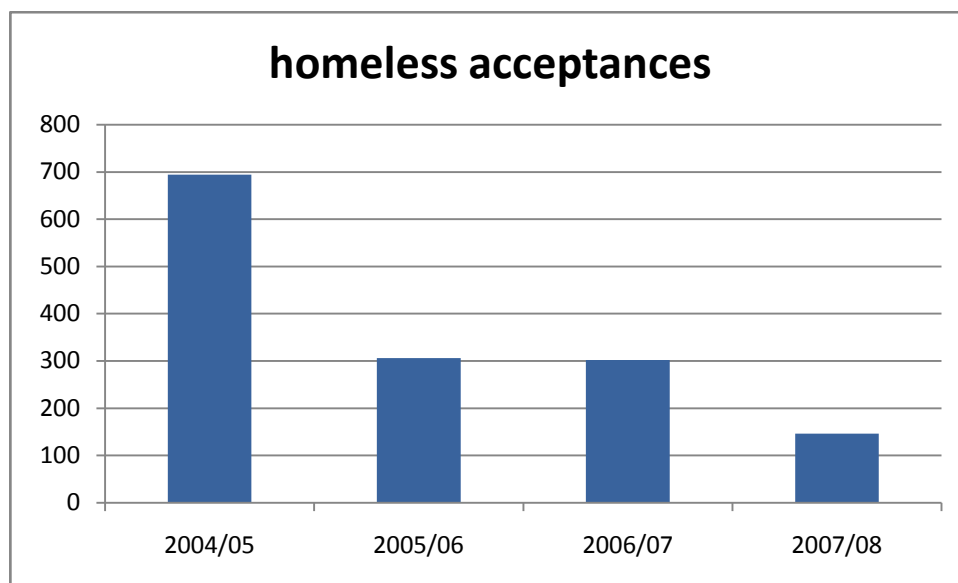
This chapter of the strategy reflects many of the strategic issues and actions contained in Rotherham's Supporting People Strategy 2005-10, and have been informed by its needs and supply mapping. Other actions have developed as result of close partnership working between housing officers, social care commissioners, the local PCT, and voluntary sector partners.

## Tackling Homelessness and Reducing Temporary Accommodation

Rotherham has been successful at keeping levels of homelessness low, and reducing temporary accommodation. Our first Homelessness Strategy was developed in 2003, and covered the five years to 2008. It had three priorities:

- To reduce homelessness through appropriate prevention measures
- To ensure appropriate and timely accommodation and support services are available
- To improve information gathering and service quality

It also placed homelessness prevention at its core, implementing a number of new initiatives. Their success is evident in the graph below:



Performance is now top quartile for use of bed and breakfast for families, homeless prevention, and minimising repeat homelessness.

Other initiatives over the five-year strategy period include:

- The successful implementation of the “Key Choices” choice based lettings scheme and the establishment of the Key Choices Property Shop
- Launching a successful Quality Landlord Scheme with private landlords – already recognised by CLG as undertaking best practice
- Increasing uptake of Robond by 10% – our tenancy deposit scheme
- Increasing the number of housing solutions home visits

- Increasing the number of homes in our new Furnished Homes Scheme – which last year furnished the new lettings of over 100 vulnerable tenants
- Extending choice based lettings to other tenures – housing associations, private rented, intermediate housing, and Homebuy
- Providing a one-stop housing advice, choices and options service to residents from all tenures

We are in the process of consulting with partners on an update to the previous strategy, to be produced in Autumn 2008.

**The main targets and actions for the period 2008-11 are:**

- **Sustaining the government's 2010 target for halving temporary accommodation use – we have already met our target of 31 units, now we are aiming to improve on it**
- **Full relocation to our new town centre Property Shop – our one stop shop for housing options, advice and choice based lettings**
- **Increasing the number of landlords and lettings through the Rotherham Quality Landlords Scheme**
- **Developing a gateway service for all emergency accommodation**
- **Developing a Sub-Regional Choice Based Lettings Scheme, in partnership with other South Yorkshire councils**

## Supported housing and floating support

Our aim with special needs housing and support is to enable people to live independent lives as far as possible, with the appropriate level of support and care. We also try to ensure that accommodation based solutions are available for people for whom independent living is not possible, either on a temporary or permanent basis.

### Independent living and support

Our Supporting People programme provides housing related support to a range of vulnerable client groups in Rotherham. The 2005-10 Supporting People set out priority areas for development, including:

- Floating support services for adults aged 18-65
- Outreach for teenage parents

- Cross authority provision for people with HIV/AIDS
- Additional mental health support for offenders
- Floating support for gypsies and travellers

The Supporting People Commissioning Body is working to address these priority areas, through a mixture of re-commissioning and reconfiguring of existing services. This is being achieved against a background of real cuts to Supporting People Grant for Rotherham. Any new or additional services will need to come from efficiency savings and decommissioning of poor performing services.

Many vulnerable people have particular needs from their homes, in order to be able to live independently. For instance, people with physical disabilities may need level access or single floor accommodation, some people with learning disabilities need apartment complexes, and many people have carers.

We are committed to meeting these housing needs wherever possible. Our successes so far include:

- Provision of 23 move-on homes (via Arches HA) for people leaving supported accommodation
- Bungalow provision within new housing developments at Canklow
- Effective MAPPA arrangements and a dedicated Independent Living Team, managing hospital discharges
- Providing hundreds of Disabled Facilities Grants through a targeted programme to enable people to remain in their own homes
- Developing over 40 Supported Living Schemes for people with Learning Disability (Rotherham is one of 4 beacon councils for Valuing People)

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Deliver a DFG programme of £1.4 million per year**
- **Ensure that all new affordable homes are built to “Lifetime Homes” standards by 2011**
- **Start a Joint Commissioning Board to identify potential housing developments for vulnerable people**
- **Continue to develop Supported Living Schemes for people with Learning Disabilities**
- **Work to maximise the value for money we get from a reducing Supporting People grant, aiming not to reduce service levels**



## Accommodation based solutions

The levels of supported housing schemes in Rotherham are quite close to the national average. Limited resources mean that we have had to target our development activities in this area. We have been able to develop some new schemes recently, including a core and cluster scheme for teenage parents and additional units for ex-offenders.

We are about to start a new Joint Commissioning Board to identify supported housing development opportunities. The results will inform our affordable housing development programme and planning guidance, enabling us to match projected need with long term supply provision.

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Commence regular meetings of the new Joint Commissioning Board**
- **Correlate research into the housing needs of vulnerable people**
- **Carry out a feasibility study for a new Foyer-type development in the borough**



## Meeting BME Housing Need

In 2005, we published a Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy, which set out how we plan to address the housing issues faced by many BME households in the borough. A comprehensive review and update of the strategy is currently underway.

The strategy concentrates on housing choice, quality homes, and access to services. There is also the fundamental requirement to maintain a thorough understanding of the range of BME housing needs. The Council as a whole has been assessed as providing services that meet Level 3 of the national Equalities Standard, and is aiming for Level 5 across the board by 2010.

We have carried out a range of BME specific research, and also ensure that other housing research that we commission or undertake includes BME analyses. Examples include:

- Carrying out community and ethnicity profiling for baseline studies of our Place-Shaping projects
- 2010 Rotherham Ltd have developed a comprehensive tenant database, with details of ethnicity and language/access requirements
- Our Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007 and Private Sector Condition Survey both involved BME data collection and analysis
- HMR masterplanning involved BME consultation and aspirations

We have also been successful in taking forward the action plan from the BME strategy. For instance all officers now receive equalities and diversity training; a floating support service is now in place for asylum seekers; new racist incident systems and publicity have been provided; and a range of official publications are available in various media and translations (including DVD format).

We have improved housing choice through our new Key Choices CBL scheme, and our town centre Property Shop co-ordinates both CBL and all other housing options advice in a central one-stop service. Officers have all been trained in cultural awareness and BME housing needs, and translators and culturally specific publications are available.

In terms of new housing provision, we are encouraging developers to include large family homes in new developments, and our own affordable housing programme includes larger family homes and some culturally specific housing provision. Our most recent scheme is in partnership with Sadeh-Lok HA, developing six larger homes for BME households on the former Ferham School site. We are also working with 2010 Rotherham Ltd to re-model council homes at Eastwood, in a programme which includes extensions to create larger family homes (four bedrooms and above).

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Continue to commission new affordable housing that meets BME needs**
- **Monitor the impact of Key Choices on lettings to BME households – including quantity, quality and location**
- **Look to roll out our remodelling of Council homes to more areas/estates**
- **Provide a range of inter-faith and intergenerational activities as part of our place-shaping programmes**
- **Target private sector investment at older properties – which are more likely to include BME households**
- **Work with the Rotherham District Landlords Association to improve private rented sector standards, and use enforcement activity to tackle the worst landlords – our private sector survey shows that people from EU accession states are most likely to be in poor quality rented homes**
- **Adopt the use of selective licensing in the private rented sector to address areas suffering from low demand and/or significant and persistent anti-social behaviour.**
- **Target energy efficiency grants at BME communities and affordable warmth publicity at community venues/facilities**
- **Continue to develop our understanding of migration from EU Accession states**

## **Older Persons' Housing**

Rotherham's recent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlighted the trends associated with an increasingly elderly population. By 2021, the number of people over 60 in the borough will have risen by 30% - to over 70,000. Over the same period, the number of people living past 85 will have increased by 65%. These increases run parallel to a desire for independent living – with specific older persons' residential provision now needed mainly for the very frail, or those unable to remain in their own homes.

We have already started to reconfigure our services to meet the changing demographics and associated changes in older persons' housing needs. We will also be working towards the aims of the new national strategy for housing in an ageing society, "Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods".

### **Independent Living**

- We are building more new homes to "Lifetime Homes" standards

- We are providing bungalows for older people in new developments (e.g. Canklow)
- We are encouraging developers to build retirement homes for owner –occupation
- We are targeting energy efficiency grants and Save N Warm improvements towards older people in all tenures – including publicity and marketing campaigns
- We have launched a Care and Repair Home Improvement Scheme which carries out repairs and maintenance to older peoples’ homes through Anchor Staying Put
- We have increased floating support provision to older people (via Supporting People) in partnership with the PCT
- We are developing an integration and support strategy
- We have spent £0.4m of Regional Housing Boards funding on improvements to sheltered properties and intend to spend a further £1.9m

### **Specific Housing Provision**

The redevelopment of our older persons’ housing is underway to meet changing needs, whereby existing low demand and obsolete sheltered housing is being decommissioned. We have started a programme of developing extra-care housing schemes, suitable for very frail residents, with 24-hour support and care provision on-site.

We have already developed two new schemes, providing 65 units at Oak Trees and Potteries Court. A third is in development at Longfellow Drive, and will be ready for occupation later in 2009.

We are also looking at the potential demand for owner-occupied or shared ownership extra care provision, which would allow home-owners to transfer equity if required.

### **Under-occupation**

We are developing a number of initiatives to address under-occupation within the borough. Our aim is to free up a supply of larger homes for families in need, across social and owner-occupied tenures. The statistics below illustrate why older persons’ households could unlock this potential.

- Over 25% of all homes in Rotherham include one or more people over retirement age
- 56% of all single person households are occupied by an older person
- Over half of all households with one or more older people have three bedrooms or more

Initiatives to encourage people to move include: 2010 Rotherham Ltd offering incentives and assistance to under-occupiers to move to more suitable accommodation; encouraging the development of more retirement homes; and developing products to facilitate equity transfer.

Over the years 2008-11 we will:

- Meet the new national requirement to build all new affordable homes to Lifetime Homes standards as soon as possible
- Identify and commission further extra care provision, jointly with Rotherham PCT and Supporting People
- Work with developers to encourage innovative new retirement housing provision
- Increase energy advice referrals amongst older people by 20%
- Increase the number of repairs carried out by our Home Improvement Service
- Increase the number of under-occupation moves year-on-year
- Work to improve inclusion and access and reduce social isolation through our place-shaping services
- Improve advice and guidance to older people so that they can make informed housing choices



## Gypsies and travellers

The 2006 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Study for South Yorkshire identified a gypsy and traveller population of about 400 in Rotherham (which is relatively low for the region). However,

there is no Council owned or managed site provision within the borough. Existing mobile home provision is on private sites, or unauthorised encampments.

The 2006 study estimated that an additional 276 pitches are required in the sub-region, of which 28 should be developed in Rotherham.

Roughly 40% of gypsy and traveller families in Rotherham live in bricks and mortar accommodation. This is predominantly in the private rented sector, and poor conditions are not uncommon.

We are currently consulting on a draft Gypsy and Traveller Action plan for Rotherham, which will co-ordinate a multi-agency approach to meeting housing needs.

**Over the years 2008-11 we will:**

- **Develop new Council-owned site provision within Rotherham – two possible sites are already being assessed**
- **Target additional floating support provision at gypsies and travellers, through the Supporting People programme**
- **Pursue enforcement activity against the worst performing landlords in the private rented sector**
- **Continue to work with our Children's' Service to identify hidden gypsy and traveller households**

## Theme 3 – Inclusion and access

### Summary of Key Actions

#### Tackling homelessness

- Sustain temporary accommodation use at below the 2010 target figure
- Extend Key Choices to other tenures
- Develop a new gateway service for emergency accommodation
- Increase numbers in the Rotherham Quality Landlords scheme

#### Special needs housing and support

- Deliver an annual Disabled Facilities Grant Programme of £1.4 million
- Commission and develop more Supported Living Schemes for people with Learning Disabilities
- Build all new affordable homes to Lifetime Homes standards (by 2011)
- Maximise Value for Money from Supporting People contracts

#### Meeting BME housing need

- Commission more new housing to meet BME needs
- Continue the programme of extensions to council stock
- Target private sector housing investment at older properties and BME communities

#### Older persons housing

- Develop additional extra care schemes to meet changing patterns of demand
- Encourage more home-ownership solutions for older people
- Increase moves and transfers due to under-occupation
- Increase energy efficiency referrals and investment

#### Gypsies and travellers

- Develop a new Council-owned site for mobile homes
- Improve floating support provision for gypsies and travellers
- Pursue enforcement activity against the worst private sector landlords

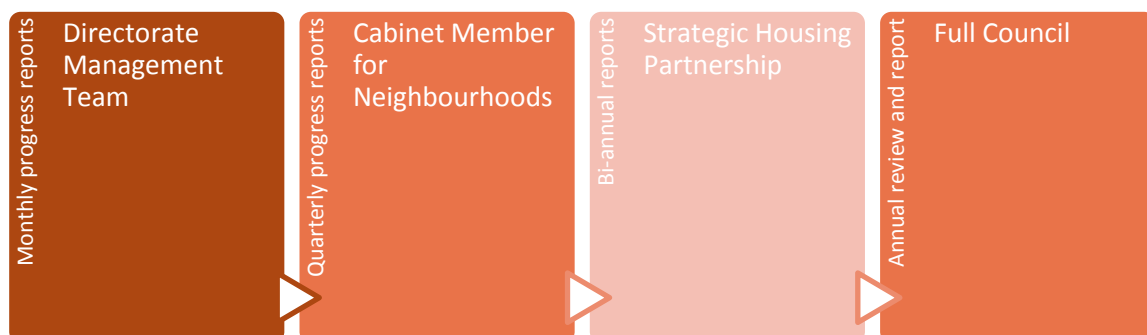
## Delivery

Having a fit for purpose housing strategy is a good thing. But it is nothing without the ability to deliver against the commitments, targets and deadlines that are contained in the strategy and action plan. We will measure our success by how we perform in these areas between now and 2011/12.

The earlier section on our achievements shows how we have achieved over 95% of our actions from the previous strategy. If we can maintain and improve on this level of performance, then we can be fairly confident that we will achieve our main goals for housing over the 2008-11 period.

## Governance and monitoring

The Strategy is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Council. Several key groups and boards receive regular progress updates, setting out performance to date against the main objectives and individual actions. Exception reports are provided for any areas where performance is below or behind target.



## Housing Strategy Action Plan

The Housing Strategy is supported by an action plan which clearly sets out:-

- All the actions that will be taken in order to deliver the strategic objectives and service priorities;
- Timescales for completion;
- Identification of lead officers to deliver each priority action;
- Resource implications;



- Targets and milestones; and
- Anticipated outcomes.

In accordance with the Audit Commission guidance all priority actions are SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound.

Annual action plan targets are incorporated within the Housing Service Annual Excellence Plan. Progress against this plan is monitored on a fortnightly basis by a group of senior housing and managers, chaired by the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services.

## Reviewing and updating the strategy

A formal review of the Housing Strategy will be undertaken on an annual basis to ensure that the strategic objectives remain appropriate and to determine progress against the stated actions. This review process involves a number of steps including a review of the strategy against:-

- Government objectives and any new regulatory requirements
- Changing regional and sub regional policies and priorities
- Changing and emerging housing needs in the borough
- How housing can and will contribute to new or revised corporate objectives or those determined by the Rotherham Partnership (LSP)
- Other associated strategies for example Homelessness Prevention, Private Sector Housing, Supporting People, BME Housing, Rural Housing, Gypsy and Travellers Plan, Extra Care Housing etc.
- Stakeholder views. These are obtained on an ongoing basis through a number of consultation and discussion forums including:-
  - Strategic Housing Partnership
  - RSL Forum
  - Private Landlord forum
  - Service Users Inclusive Forum (Supporting People)
  - Reachout
  - Tenant and Residents groups

## Resources

Resources for housing strategic initiatives and actions come from a variety of sources – including Council revenue and capital budgets, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), National Affordable

Housing Programme, Housing Market Renewal, Regional Housing Pot, Supporting People, the CLG, and other public and private sector organisations.

Where possible we try to maximise resources and value for money by aligning funding streams to target various tenures, types of housing or geographical areas, thus increasing the overall impact of our expenditure. Examples include:

- Aligning HMR pathfinder resources and 2010 Rotherham decent homes funds when redeveloping council housing
- Targeting private sector housing investment at the private rented sector and homes built before 1919
- Combining HNS capital resources, Supporting People revenue funds and land discount to develop new extra care housing schemes

## Budget spreadsheets 2008-11

# Action Plan

## Appendix A - Analysis of Housing Need

Our understanding of housing needs in Rotherham has been informed by a range of sources, including:

- Rotherham Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Fordham Research 2007)
- Rotherham Private Sector Stock Condition Survey (Fordham Research 2008)
- Census data
- National Performance Indicator returns
- Housing Market Renewal Strategic Bid (Transform South Yorkshire 2008)
- Rotherham Supporting People Strategy and Needs/Supply analysis
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Rotherham MBC & Primary Care Trust 2008)
- Rotherham Public Health Strategy (Rotherham MBC & Primary Care Trust 2006)
- The Rotherham Statement (Transform South Yorkshire 2005)
- Rotherham Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (2007)
- Rotherham HRA Business Plan Statistical Appendix (2007)
- Rotherham Affordable Warmth Strategy (2007)
- Rotherham Respect Action Plan (2008)
- Rotherham MBC Neighbourhoods and Adults Services Departmental Service Plan (2006)

The above information was augmented through meetings and discussions with key officers, stakeholders and partners.

The needs analysis has been split into four areas:

- Context
- The housing market
- Projected housing needs
- Special needs housing

### Context

Rotherham's housing market area is broadly defined by the borough boundaries, although obviously we encompass several larger housing markets, such as the Sheffield City Region and the Dearne Valley (Doncaster axis). For this needs analysis the market area has been defined using the Government's housing market definition, which includes household migration patterns and travel to work areas.

## Population

The population of Rotherham has increased in the last 10 years, and now stands at 254,000. This is an increase from 247,000 in 2000. However, the current population is now the same as the population in 1981, prior to the years of industrial and economic decline experienced by the region. By comparison, nationally population increased by 7% over the same period.

As Rotherham is now experiencing a period of rapid industrial and economic growth, the previous population trends are changing. The borough's population is projected to increase by 7% by 2021, to a total of 271,600. Or, put another way, an increase of 17,000 people in under 15 years.

In household terms, we can expect a significant increase due partially to the population influx, but also as household size is falling. By 2021, the number of households in Rotherham will have increased from 108,000 to 124,000 – an increase of 16,000 households.

### Change in households and household size (source CLG and ONS)

Date	Population	Households	Ave household size
2006	254,600	108,000	2.36
2011	259,900	113,000	2.30
2016	265,800	119,000	2.23
2021	271,600	124,000	2.19

Other significant population trends are that the number of people aged over 60 is expected to rise by 30% over the period – to a total of 72,200. The number of people who are 85 or over will rise by 56%.

## Economy

Economic growth in Rotherham has been prolific. Between 1995 and 2005, the number of jobs in the borough grew by 41% (to a total of 104,800). Compared with South Yorkshire (24% increase) and all of England and Wales (16.6%), it is evident that our economic renaissance is well under way.

When planning for housing we should examine the employment profile of the borough. Rotherham has a lower proportion of managerial and professional jobs than the national average, but higher percentages of trades, process, plant and sales jobs. In other words, we have more lower paid manufacturing and services jobs.

### Employment types by sector (source NOMIS 2007)

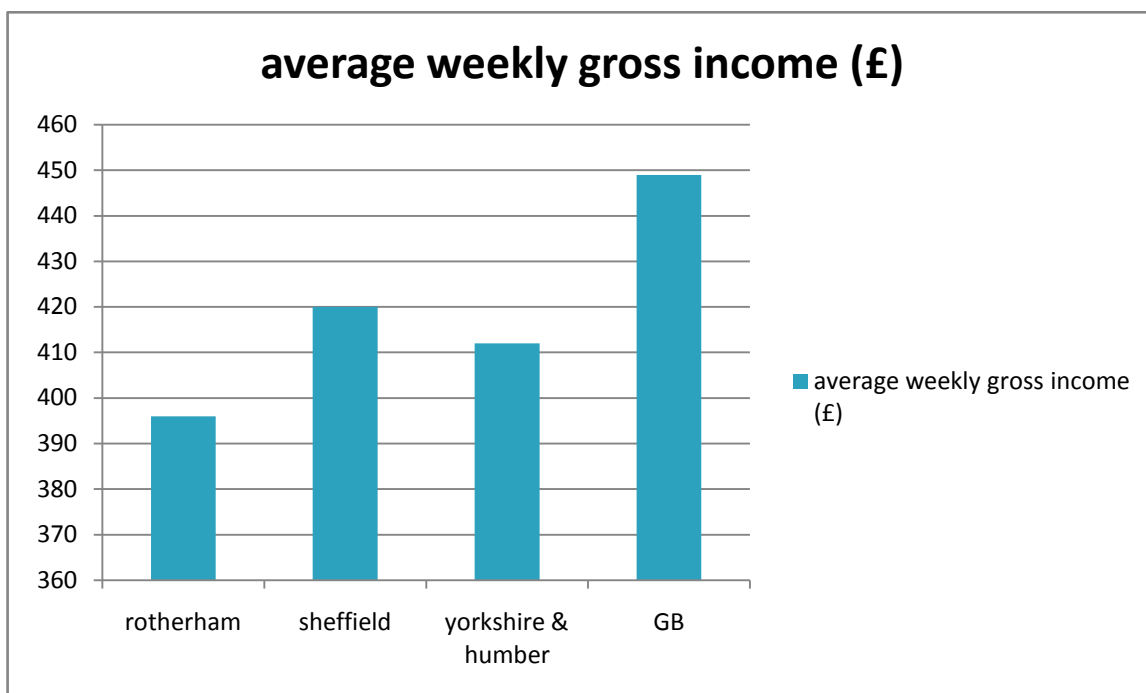
Employment category	Rotherham (%)	GB (%)
Manufacturing	16.1	11.1
Construction	6.1	4.6
Distribution and hospitality	23.9	24.1
Transport & communications	6.7	6.0
Finance and IT	17.3	20.7
Public administration, education & health	24.5	26.9
Other services	4.0	5.2
Agriculture, fishing, energy & water	1.4	1.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Unemployment has declined in Rotherham in recent years. The current unemployment rate of 4.9% is pretty much the same as the national figure. This is in contrast to the position of 10 years ago, when local unemployment was considerably higher.

Of concern, however, is the picture of skills and attainment, where the level is lower than the national or regional picture. 16.8% of Rotherham's population have no formal qualifications, compared with only 14.3% nationally. And whilst at a national level 26.5% of people have a degree level qualification, only 17% of people in Rotherham have reached this level.

This finds its way through to peoples' wages and salaries. Average incomes in Rotherham are slightly lower than the regional average, and lower than those in neighbouring Sheffield. They are also considerably below the national average.

Earnings are obviously a crucial factor in households' ability to afford housing, and to exercise choice over type, tenure and location of their homes.



Source: annual survey of earnings 2006

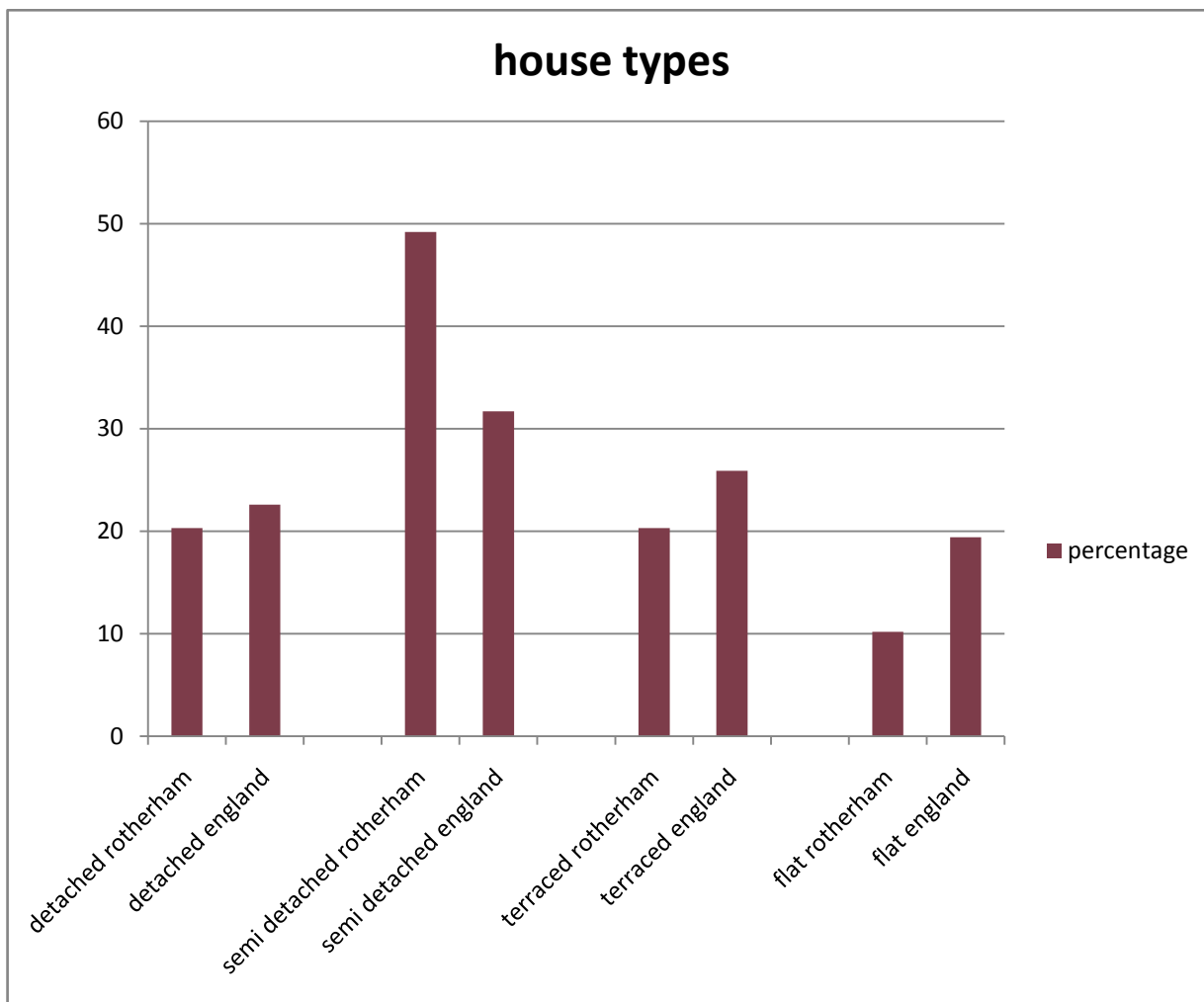
## Housing stock

There are approximately 110,000 dwellings in Rotherham. Tenure breakdown is as follows:

- Owner occupied 65.3%
- Council rented 23.2%
- Housing association 3.2%
- Private rented 5.0%

We have a lower level of home ownership than the national average, and a smaller private rented sector. Local authority rented housing is considerably above the national average of 13.2%.

An examination of dwelling types reveals that Rotherham has a much higher proportion of semi-detached houses than is the case nationally. By contrast, we have a significantly lower level of flats and apartments.



Source: Census

The majority of dwellings in Rotherham fall into Council Tax band “A” (57% of homes). This is a considerably higher proportion than regionally or nationally, and reflects the generally lower value of dwellings in the borough.

Vacancy rates are, however, comparatively low at 3.4%, compared with 3.9% across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

## The Rotherham housing market

### Owner occupation

The table below shows price levels for Rotherham and for comparator areas. House prices in Rotherham are considerably below the national average, and slightly below the regional average.



Average House Prices (Source: Land Registry 2008)

Area	Ave price (£)	As % of Eng & Wales
England & Wales	185,616	100.0%
Rotherham	120,607	65.0%
Sheffield	140,003	75.4%
Yorkshire & Humber	148,385	79.9%

Between 2001 and 2006, the average house price in Rotherham rose by 99%, significantly above the national increase of 61% for the same period. The last ten years have seen house prices rise locally and nationally. At the time of writing in early 2008, there are signs that this may be about to change, with a global “credit crunch” beginning to take effect. However, at this stage there are no accurate indications of the effect that this will have, either locally or nationally. Prices may level off, or even start to reduce, although by how much is still in the realm of guesswork.

The 2007 Strategic Housing Market Assessment analysed local data and surveyed a range of stakeholders to gain a spatial picture of the local housing market. The main findings were:

- Prices tend to rise towards the central and southern parts of the borough
- There have been more rapid price rises recently in northern wards
- The market has a large buy-to-let influence

Entry level housing costs are shown below, by Area Assembly boundary:

Area Assembly	2 bedrooms (£)	3 bedrooms (£)	4 bedrooms (£)
Rother Valley South	89,500	116,600	174,200
Rother Valley West	84,800	106,600	155,600
Rotherham North	69,400	96,300	156,600
Rotherham South	75,800	118,900	209,100
Wentworth North	83,900	105,800	170,500
Wentworth South	84,000	103,800	167,100
Wentworth Valley	81,300	107,100	162,000
<b>Whole Borough</b>	<b>81,000</b>	<b>108,000</b>	<b>171,000</b>

Source – Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2007

Although there are some price variations within the borough, they are not hugely significant.

New build homes are considerably more expensive than purchasing second-hand homes. On average, the Strategic Market Assessment found new homes to be 50% more expensive.

### Private rented sector

Rotherham has a relatively small private rented sector (about 5% of all dwellings). This compares with 10-11% nationally. Entry level rented costs are shown below:

- 1 bedroom - £350 pcm
- 2 bedroom - £370 pcm
- 3 bedroom - £450 pcm

There appear to be few larger properties available for private rent (4 bedrooms or above). The sector has a higher concentration of dwellings in urban centres and proportionately more terraced homes than the Rotherham average.

### Social rented sector

Social rented average rents are shown in the table below, taken from CORE data:

- 1 bedroom - £217 pcm
- 2 bedroom - £256 pcm
- 3 bedroom - £290 pcm
- 4 bedroom - £329 pcm

This shows that rents are considerably less than those for private renting, indicating a potential affordability gap between the two sectors. If costs are compared across the sectors, a picture of relative affordability emerges (see table below). This clearly shows that there is an affordability gap between social renting and private renting, and a further gap between renting and owner-occupation.

#### Monthly outgoings by tenure (SHMA 2007)

Size	Social rent (£)	Private rent (£)	Owner occupation (£)
2 bedrooms	256	370	405
3 bedrooms	290	450	540

## Household characteristics

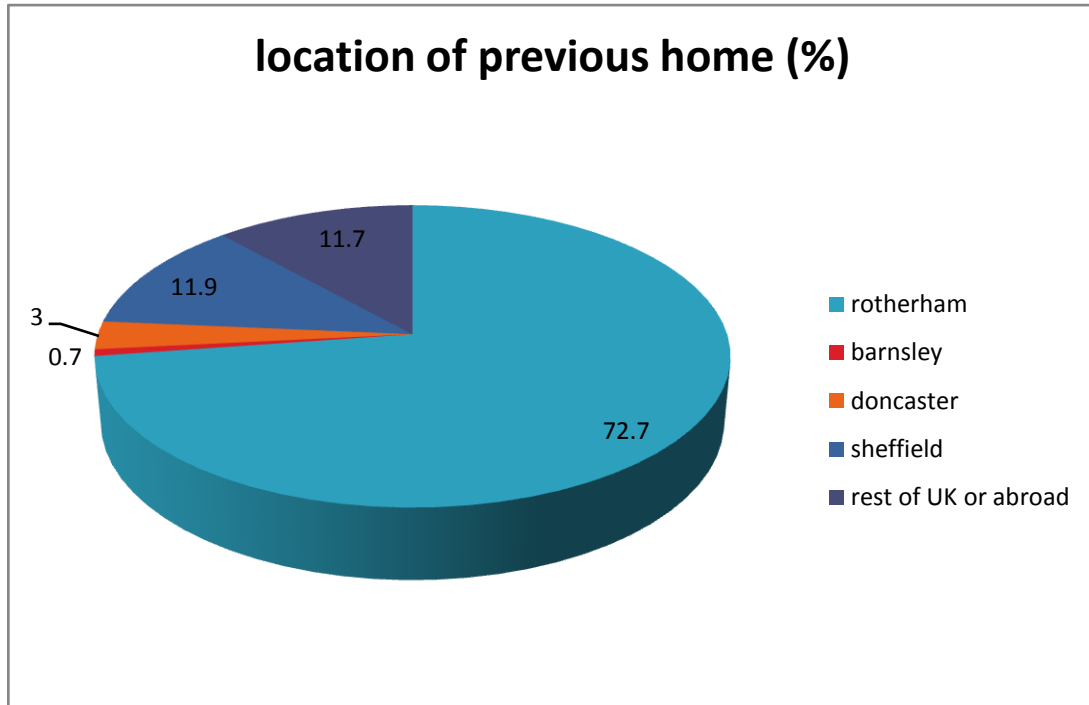
The bullet points show the headline household characteristics of the Rotherham housing market:

- 25.7% of households are pensioner only homes
- 28.3% of households contain children
- 12% of are single non pensioner households

Average household size is 2.4 persons, roughly the same as the national average. Owner occupiers with mortgages tend to have the largest households (2.9 average), whilst social rented households are the smallest (2.0 on average).

Households in Rotherham are more settled than the national average – over 75% of people have lived at their current home for more than five years. Owner occupiers are most settled (only 8% have moved within the last two years), and private rented tenants the least settled (46% have moved).

The vast majority of moves are within the Rotherham housing market area (72.7%). Only 11.7% of moves within the last two years are from elsewhere in the UK or abroad, as the diagram below illustrates.



Source: SHMA 2007

An examination of employment status also reveals interesting facts about the local housing market. Owner occupiers with a mortgage have by far the highest proportion of household members in employment:

- Owner occupiers with a mortgage – 75.5% in employment
- Owner occupiers with no mortgage – 24.1% in employment (although 67.2% retired)
- Private renters – 49.5% in employment
- Social renters – 15.8% in employment

Obviously, these figures have a sizeable impact on peoples' ability to access other types and tenures of housing. A comparison of average income reveals significant tenure variations – with owner occupiers having average incomes of over £30,000 per household, private renters having average incomes of £15,000 per household and social renters having an income of less than £10,000 per household. Rotherham's average income is £21,810, which is about 10% less than the national average.

Average incomes vary geographically within the Borough. There is a £10,000 gap in household income between the two more affluent Rother Valley wards and the town centre wards of Rotherham North and Rotherham South.

Many households in Rotherham spend more than 25% of their income on housing costs – over 20% of owner occupiers and over 60% of social rented and private sector tenants. A significant number are spending over 50% of their income on housing (although this does not take account of housing benefit costs).

## Projected Housing Needs

The Department for Communities and Local Government defines housing need as:

*“households who lack their own housing, or live in unsuitable housing and who cannot afford to meet their needs in the market.”*

For affordability purposes we are assuming the ability to secure a mortgage at a 3.5 multiple of income, or for renting, spending more than 25% of gross income on housing costs.

In Rotherham there are currently 6,000 households living in unsuitable accommodation (5.6% of all households). By tenure this breaks down as:

- Owner occupied – 46%

- Social rented – 42.4%
- Private rented – 11.8%

Our 2007 Strategic Market Assessment estimates that 3,534 of these households need a move to alternative accommodation. The Market Assessment also estimates that there is a backlog of unmet housing need of 2,278 households, and an annual need from newly formed households of 2,050.

Using the CLG-approved Needs Model, it is possible to compile an estimate of net annual housing need.

#### Needs Model for Rotherham (source SHMA 2007)

Stage of calculation	Output (households)
<b>Stage 1 – Current Need</b>	
Total current housing need (gross)	2,278
<b>Stage 2 – Future Need</b>	
New household formation	1,382
Proportion unable to buy or rent at market rate	40.8%
Existing households falling into need	1,488
Total newly arising need (gross per year)	2,051
<b>Stage 3 – Affordable Housing Supply</b>	
Affordable homes occupied by households in need	1,111
Committed supply of affordable housing	492
Total affordable stock available (combined)	1,603
Annual supply of re-lets (net)	1,770
Annual intermediate supply available	5
Annual supply of affordable housing	1,775
<b>Stage 4 – Net current need</b>	
Net current need (gross)	675
Annualised net current need	135
<b>Stage 5 – Annual net housing need</b>	
Net annual housing need (backlog + new need – supply)	411

This leaves us with an annual net housing need of 411 households. In national terms this is fairly low: Fordham research estimates this at a rate of 4 homes per 1,000 households (against a national average of 16 per 1,000). However, when set against affordability and income criteria, it is still a significant need that is not being met at present. Failure to address this need is likely to have a significant impact on the future socio-economic success of the borough.

It is possible to provide an estimate of how much of this affordable housing need should be met by tenure – i.e. social rented or intermediate affordable housing (NB – intermediate housing covers a range of products from low cost home ownership through to sub-market rented housing). Using data on household size, incomes and prices, the 2007 SHMA estimates that there is potential for 51.6% of the net need to be met by intermediate housing (212 households out of the net 411 annual need figure).

The SHMA provides a sensitivity analysis to cover the event of prices falling by either 10% or 20%. This is quite a useful tool, given the financial climate of early 2008. The analysis assumes that the supply of affordable housing and income and savings levels will be unchanged.

Scenario	Net housing need
Prices fall by 10%	370
Prices fall by 20%	322
Rents fall by 10%	300
Prices and rents fall by 10%	259

Source SHMA 2007

Even taking a significant house price and rents decline, there will still be the need for over 250 new affordable homes per year.

### Types of housing

Using the SHMA and data from other sources, we have analysed the types of housing likely to be required by those households that are in housing need.

The first step examines all tenures, and assesses where surpluses and shortfalls may exist, using the Fordham Research Balancing Housing Markets model. The result is a net demand of 792 dwellings per year (across all tenures). This is close to the Regional Spatial Strategy target of 750 new homes each year. The model also suggests that:

- There is an ongoing need for owner occupied housing
- There is a large unmet need for social rented and intermediate housing
- The main shortfall is in two-bedroom homes
- There is a potential surplus of three bedroom homes
- There is a small, but significant need for one bedroom homes and homes with four bedrooms or more

## Rural housing need

Geographically, the majority of Rotherham is rural – over 70% of the borough. However, in population terms, the majority of people live in urban areas (88.9%). By way of definition, “urban” consists of settlements with a population of 10,000 or more.

Settlement type	Households	Percentage
Urban	95,104	88.9%
Town and fringe	9,557	8.9%
Village	1,881	1.8%
Hamlet	458	0.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>107,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source – household survey data 2007

To define “rural” we include all households in non-urban categories - this equates to a total rural population of nearly 12,000. Only seven electoral wards contain rural populations according to this definition. They are:

- Wales – 100% rural households
- Rother Vale – 76.5%
- Keppel – 32.6%
- Anston & Woodsetts – 19.1%
- Hooper – 13.0%
- Dinnington – 9.0%
- Silverwood – 2.9%

There are marked differences between the rural and urban populations in Rotherham. For instance, average rural earnings are higher - £28,867 compared to £20,928. Only 14.7% of rural households do not have access to a car (30.5% in urban areas).

There are also differences in house types. 41% of rural homes are detached, compared with 17% in urban areas. And owner-occupation stands at 85% in rural areas, with only 10% social rented housing.

The Government’s Affordable Rural Housing Commission states that poor access to services is one of the key issues facing rural communities. However, the 2007 Rotherham SHMA found little variation

in access between rural and urban households, with rural communities even enjoying better access to some amenities, such as hospitals, shops and banks.

The following table shows the CLG Needs Model applied to urban and rural housing need. As can be seen, over 20% of net annual need is rural, even though the rural population is only 11.1%. This suggests that rural households experience a disproportionate need for affordable housing – although due to a lack of supply rather than through non-affordability.

Urban and rural housing requirements (source household survey data and SHMA 2007)

	Urban	Rural	Total
Total annual need	2,308	198	2,507
% of annual need	92.1%	7.9%	100.0%
Total annual supply	1,989	107	2,096
% of annual supply	94.9%	5.1%	100.0%
<b>Net shortfall</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>411</b>
<b>% of net shortfall</b>	<b>77.8%</b>	<b>22.2%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Households with Specific Needs

This section examines groups and households who may have special or additional housing needs, and are likely to need assistance in order to enjoy fair and equal access to housing. It is worth pointing out at this stage that not every household in the groups concerned will have additional needs just that needs have been identified in relation to a significant proportion of constituent households.

This section covers the following groups:

- Black and minority ethnic households (BME)
- Gypsies and travellers
- Households with support needs

### BME Households

Rotherham's BME population makes up around 5.4% of the total, well below the national average of 11.7%. The largest group is South Asian (including Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi households) at 2.1% of total population.



Significantly, data and consultation evidence shows that Rotherham’s BME population has increased in wealth and is beginning to disperse away from more traditionally BME concentrated areas of the borough.

Average household size by ethnicity shows some disparity with the white British/Irish population, particularly for South Asian communities. This is a significant factor in housing needs terms.

	<b>White British/Irish</b>	<b>South Asian</b>	<b>Other BME</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Ave household size	2.34	4.64	2.42	2.39

Source: primary data

There are 48.3% South Asian households with two or more children – more than four times as many as the rest of the local population. Single South Asian households are almost non-existent.

In terms of tenure, South Asian households are more likely to live in owner occupation, and less likely to be social renters. Other BME groups exhibit lower levels of owner-occupation, possibly reflecting their more recent arrival in the UK.

Spatially, the urban wards of Rotherham North and Rotherham South contain the highest proportion of non-white residents (4.9% and 13.6% respectively). Essentially, the highest proportions of BME residents are in the main urban centres.

The other main characteristics of BME communities in Rotherham are:

- Average incomes for South Asian and other BME communities are lower than those for the white British and Irish population
- South Asian households are four times more likely to be living in unsuitable accommodation
- 22% of South Asian households are overcrowded, compared with a borough average of 2.1%
- 11% of South Asian households are in housing need, as are 13.4% of other BME households (compared with only 1.9% of white British/Irish households)

### **Gypsies and travellers**

The Northern Housing Consortium carried out a South Yorkshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Study in 2006. The study found that Rotherham has a relatively small gypsy and traveller population – 86 households, or about 400 people.

40% of our gypsy and traveller population live in bricks and mortar houses/flats, the remainder in mobile homes. Over a third of the families in houses and flats live in the private rented sector and are highly likely to live in unsuitable or poor quality accommodation.

The families who have mobile homes either stay on private sites or in unauthorised encampments. Rotherham does not at present have a Council-owned or managed site.

The 2006 Study found a need for 276 additional pitches across South Yorkshire, and suggested that at least 28 of these could be in Rotherham.

### Households with support needs

The Census data reveals that 22.4% of people in Rotherham have a long-term limiting illness; and nearly half of these are of working age. There are 18,471 households with one or more members in an identified support needs group, a figure equal to 17.3% of all households. This is higher than the national average of 13-14% (Fordham Research).

The breakdown by support needs group is as follows:

Category	No of households	% of all households	% of households with support needs
Frail elderly	3,494	3.3%	18.9%
Physical/mobility impairment	13,017	12.2%	70.5%
Learning disability	1,208	1.1%	6.5%
Mental health	1,156	1.1%	6.3%
Severe sensory impairment	2,014	1.9%	10.9%
Non-visible condition	1,663	1.6%	9.0%
Other	80	0.1%	0.4%

Source – household survey data 2007

Within this breakdown, an estimated 3,275 households contain someone with multiple needs.

Spatially, households with support needs are well-dispersed throughout the borough. No borough has a significantly higher proportion, although Wentworth Valley Area Assembly has relatively low levels of support needs.

Using a range of data sources – Supporting People, Commissioning Plans, SHMA and Census data, we have analysed the main support needs by client group:

■ Older people:

- An ageing population – there will be over 72,000 people aged 60+ by 2021
- People generally want to remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible
- Over half of households with older people are in three bedroom or larger properties – suggesting potential under-occupation
- Existing sheltered housing provision is no longer popular or fit for purpose; extra care accommodation is becoming the preferred model
- An increasing proportion of carers are over 65 years old
- Rotherham has higher levels of dementia than the rest of South Yorkshire – the number of people with dementia is expected to increase by 23% to 4,000+ by 2020.

■ Homelessness:

- The borough has reduced levels of homelessness, due to a more pro-active approach adopted in the last few years
- The Government has set a target of halving temporary accommodation (TA) use by 2010 – for Rotherham this means reducing households in TA to 31
- The need for a single “gateway” service for emergency accommodation has been identified

■ Learning disability:

- There are 840 adults in Rotherham with Learning Disabilities – nearly half live with their families, the remainder are living independently or in residential care
- Nearly 75 people have carers who are over 70 years old
- At least half of the people on the borough’s Learning Disability Register will eventually need fully supported accommodation solutions
- Rotherham has over 40 Supported Living schemes, mainly in the RSL sector – however this does not meet projected need

■ Physical and sensory impairment:

- Over 25,000 people in Rotherham have a physical or sensory impairment – this is expected to increase by nearly 10% within the next five years
- There is a need for more housing that meets the needs of this client group – over 75% want to remain in their own home wherever possible
- There is only limited floating support available for people with physical disabilities

■ Mental health:

- 1700 people receive specialist mental health provision in Rotherham
- There are only 50 supported housing places – demand outstrips supply
- The Supporting People Strategy has identified the need to reduce in-patient beds, and the provision of more community based tenancies with intensive support

■ Teenage parents and young people at risk:

- Rotherham has a relatively high rate of teenage pregnancy
- There is a need for more floating support and move-on accommodation for teenage parents
- There are only 10 floating support placements and 3 supported lodgings for young people at risk
- The Supporting People Strategy suggests a foyer-type scheme could be developed